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## Senate

The Senate met at 3 p.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. LEAHY).

### PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Eternal God, dressed in a robe of light, this is the day that You have made. We will rejoice and be glad in it.

Lord, we place our trust in You. You have guided our life's journey through many dangers, toils, and snares. Your amazing grace continues to sustain us.

Today, show our lawmakers the right path. Lead them by Your truth and save them with Your matchless love. You continue to be the God of our salvation, and without Your mercies, we would be consumed.

And, Lord, we thank You for our incoming summer pages, and, as always, we ask You to bless Ukraine.

We pray in Your merciful Name. Amen.

### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

### RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

### CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Morning business is closed.

### LEGISLATIVE SESSION

#### HONORING OUR PROMISE TO ADDRESS COMPREHENSIVE TOXICS ACT OF 2021—Resumed

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of H.R. 3967, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 3967) to improve health care and benefits for veterans exposed to toxic substances, and for other purposes.

Pending:

Tester/Moran amendment No. 5051, in the nature of a substitute.

Schumer amendment No. 5065 (to amend No. 5051), to add an effective date.

Schumer amendment No. 5076 (to the text proposed to be stricken by amendment No. 5051), to add an effective date.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Hawaii.

Ms. HIRONO. I note the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. HIRONO). Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The majority leader is recognized.

#### GUN VIOLENCE

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, yesterday, Democratic and Republican negotiators announced an agreement on a framework for bipartisan gun safety legislation, bringing the Senate one step closer to finally—finally—responding to the plague of gun violence that afflicts our Nation and terrorizes our children.

For the first time in a long time, the Senate has a path forward on legislation that will save lives, reduce gun violence, and keep our communities safe.

Make no mistake about it, we have a lot of work left to do before we actually pass a bill, but yesterday's announcement was a positive and necessary step in the right direction.

Now comes the important work of turning this framework into legislation and legislative language that can pass Congress and be signed by the President. We must continue working with the urgency that this moment demands because, if we can save even one life from gun violence, it will well be worth it.

Once the text of this agreement is finalized, and I hope it will be as soon as possible, I will put this bill on the floor, quickly, so the Senate can move quickly to make gun safety reform a reality.

As I said, I will put this bill on the floor as soon as possible once the text of the final agreement is finalized so the Senate can act quickly to make gun safety reform a reality. So I urge my colleagues to continue working with the same good faith and urgency that has brought us to this point.

Certainly, yesterday's agreement does not have everything Democrats wanted, but it nevertheless represents the most significant reform to gun safety laws that we have seen in decades. If enacted, this legislation will make it harder for mass shooters to access assault rifles by enhancing background checks for those under 21. It will prevent tragedies before they happen by helping States with their red flag laws. It will prevent gun violence at home by closing the so-called boyfriend loophole and establish new penalties for gun traffickers. It will make our neighborhoods safer by investing in mental health and community violence intervention programs. The lion's share of gun violence happens outside the national spotlight, and these intervention programs are some of the most effective ways to reduce crime and make our communities safer.

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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Altogether, this framework is a good and necessary first step towards changing the reality of gun violence in America. It will lay the foundation for future action. Most importantly, this legislation will go a long way toward saving lives.

I want to thank Senators MURPHY, SINEMA, CORNYN, and TILLIS for working assiduously on this framework.

Senator MURPHY asked me for space to let the negotiators do their work, and I was glad to give it to them because we knew that any chance of getting something real done on gun safety was worth the effort.

I also want to thank my colleagues who were part of the bipartisan guns working group, including Senators BLUMENTHAL, MANCHIN, COONS, HEINRICH, and others.

I want to thank all the advocates, families, and volunteers who lost loved ones, who shared their stories, who marched to make a change. Without the advocates, the families, and the volunteers who lost loved ones, this bill wouldn't have happened because year after year after shooting after shooting, they didn't give up. They persisted, and it helped bring us to this important moment.

For decades, families across the country have seen the same dismal pattern play out whenever a mass shooting strikes the Nation—tragedy followed by inaction. From Columbine to Virginia Tech, to Sandy Hook, to Las Vegas, to Parkland, to Buffalo, to Uvalde, and to so many others, gridlock has prevented Congress from bringing solace to families in grief.

But no matter how many shootings have traumatized this Nation, these families have never given up in their hope of making change happen. Rather than curse the darkness, these families have responded to tragedy by lighting candles. They have shared their stories, they have marched for change, and they have done everything in their power to make sure no other parent, spouse, or sibling has to suffer the pain they have felt and live with every day.

The same is true for all the advocates, and there are so many groups who have worked on gun safety. Many members of these groups are survivors of gun violence. I have a person on my staff who is a survivor of Aurora. They all worked tirelessly for years to enact commonsense gun safety laws.

Despite decades of frustrating gridlock, I hope that yesterday's announcement brings some sense of accomplishment to these grieving families and to all of those who have marched and protested and written letters and tweeted because it is thanks to them we are at the threshold of progress.

Nearly 30 years ago, I was the author of the Brady background checks bill, and that was the last time Congress took meaningful action to address gun violence. It was a different era back then, but the lesson of that experience remains relevant today: The right law can decrease gun deaths. I believe that

there are tens of thousands of people alive today because the Brady law was passed in 1994. They don't know who they are, we don't know who they are, but it is virtually certain that that law saved thousands and thousands of lives.

I urge my colleagues to think of all the lives we can now save by turning this framework into law. Americans have waited long enough for us to take action. Too many lives—too many—have been already lost. Too many families—too many—have been left grieving.

While we can't undo the tragedies of the past, we can act now to make them less likely in the future. If this framework is enacted into law, it will do precisely that, and I urge all of us to continue working to pass gun safety legislation soon.

#### HONORING OUR PACT ACT OF 2021

Madam President, now on the PACT Act, as negotiations continue off the floor on gun safety reform, today, the Senate will move forward with the most significant expansion of veteran healthcare benefits in decades—in decades. In a few hours, the Senate will vote on cloture on the substitute amendment for the PACT Act, which Chairman TESTER and Ranking Member MORAN have been working on for months. It is my hope that we can finally pass this legislation in the next few days, well before the week is out.

The changes outlined by the PACT Act are long overdue. It would make sure any veteran suffering from toxic exposure in the line of duty could get the VA benefits they deserve. It would end the indignity that too many veterans face right now of carrying the burden of toxic exposure on their own and being forced to jump through hoop after hoop after hoop by the VA before they can get any benefits, and many of them never get them. As many as 3½ million veterans could benefit from the reforms brought about by this bill.

I urge my colleagues to keep working so we can push this bill over the finish line A-S-A-P because both sides want it, our veterans deserve it, and the veterans service organizations—the VSOs—have been telling Congress for years that change is needed at the VA. So before the week is out, the Senate should do its job and pass this bill.

#### SHIPPING REFORM

Madam President, now on the shipping bill, a few months ago, the Senate unanimously passed legislation to fight inflation by fixing unfair shipping practices that are clogging our ports and straining our supply chains. Tonight, the House will finally act on that bill and send it to the President's desk.

Inflation is the greatest frustration America has right now, and backlogs at our ports are one of the biggest drivers of price hikes that we will address through this bill.

By now, we have all seen pictures of scores of ships lining up in ports from Las Vegas to Savannah, to Seattle, to New York and New Jersey. These back-

logs have not only caused great harm for American exporters trying to send their products out into the world, they have also skyrocketed the price of goods coming into this country. The backlogs create a brutal double whammy that ultimately leaves American families paying the price.

I applaud Speaker PELOSI and all of my House colleagues for taking action on this shipping reform bill, and I want to thank my colleagues here in the Senate—Senators KLOBUCHAR and THUNE, the authors of the legislation; Chairwoman CANTWELL, who shepherded it through; and others for their leadership when this bill was before the Senate.

By reforming unfair shipping practices, Congress is taking a much needed step to lowering costs, clearing our ports, and relieving supply chains. I thank all of my colleagues for a job well done.

### EXECUTIVE SESSION

#### EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 969.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Ana Isabel de Alba, of California, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of California.

#### CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

#### CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 969, Ana Isabel de Alba, of California, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of California.

Charles E. Schumer, Richard J. Durbin, Richard Blumenthal, Alex Padilla, Christopher A. Coons, Gary C. Peters, Elizabeth Warren, Mazie Hirono, Tammy Baldwin, Tina Smith, Mark R. Warner, Edward J. Markey, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Martin Heinrich, Jeanne Shaheen, Sherrod Brown, Margaret Wood Hassan.

### LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

## EXECUTIVE SESSION

## EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 919.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Mary T. Boyle, of Maryland, to be a Commissioner of the Consumer Product Safety Commission for a term of seven years from October 27, 2018.

## CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

## CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 919, Mary T. Boyle, of Maryland, to be a Commissioner of the Consumer Product Safety Commission for a term of seven years from October 27, 2018.

Charles E. Schumer, Richard Blumenthal, Christopher A. Coons, Richard J. Durbin, Jeanne Shaheen, Catherine Cortez Masto, Margaret Wood Hassan, Jack Reed, Jacky Rosen, Benjamin L. Cardin, Amy Klobuchar, Ron Wyden, Debbie Stabenow, Jeff Merkley, Michael F. Bennet, Christopher Murphy, Edward J. Markey.

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, finally, I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum calls for the cloture motions filed today, June 13, be waived.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

## LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

## RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The minority leader is recognized.

## INFLATION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, runaway inflation has pushed workers and families to the breaking point. According to one recent poll, nearly 60 percent of Americans are making an ef-

fort to drive less and cut back on electricity use. Three in four are pinching their budgets for food and entertainment outside the home, and two-thirds are bracing for prices to climb even higher in the coming year.

Six months ago, in December, President Biden told the American people we had reached the "peak"—the peak—"of the crisis" with inflation. He said that prices would start falling "over the next couple months." But like so many of Democrats' other confident predictions about our economy, the President's statement has proven completely false.

Friday morning's inflation report provided more official confirmation of what American consumers know painfully well: The Democrats' out-of-control inflation is not letting up. In fact, it is actually getting worse.

This year to May, consumer prices rose 8.6 percent, blowing away expectations, jumping a full percentage point over the previous month and setting—you guessed it—a new 40-year high. The data underneath tell a brutal story for working families and American businesses. The categories driving inflation last month were the ones they can't do without.

Overall energy prices clocked a year-on-year increase of nearly 35 percent. Drivers are paying 48.7 percent more at the pump. And fuel oil consumers have seen prices more than double.

Food costs continue to climb at over 10 percent. Grocery prices, in particular, hit nearly 12 percent inflation, the worst year since 1979. And full service restaurant prices saw their largest increase on record.

Of course, that is not to mention the 31-year high for inflation in the services sector, the 35-year high for rent inflation, or the 42-year high for rising airfare.

Day by day, all of these painful milestones add up to one simple reality: Americans' hard-earned dollars aren't going nearly as far as they once did. Runaway inflation has swallowed up any shot of rising pay bringing more prosperity. In fact, the average worker has seen a 3.9-percent pay cut in the last year.

One mother of two in Indiana recently reported that she is earning more than she ever has in her career but "says she still feels like she is financially losing ground." This is what she had to say:

I should be able to live on my own. I'm getting ready to pay rent and it's going to take every single dime I've made.

As one of my constituents in Barbourville put it recently, "We're cutting back on everything—and I mean everything. Gas, meat, bread, it's all expensive as hell. One moment you think you can afford to buy something, then you go to the store and it's like, 'Nope, can't get that anymore either.'"

And here is a real kicker. One young couple in Utah has taken to asking themselves weekly, "What did we spend money on that we could not have spent money on?"

Imagine if Washington Democrats were willing to engage in that sort of self-reflection. Remember, it was their policy choices that made this painful situation possible. It was the Democrats' choice to insist on flooding—flooding—the economy with trillions of dollars in liberal spending last spring. And it was Democrats' choice to spend months last summer and fall working on ways to pour even more gasoline on the fire, even though working families were already feeling the pinch of inflation.

The Democratic leader himself said last spring:

I do not think the dangers of inflation, at least in the near term, are very real.

None other than some of his own party's top economists warned the exact opposite. But Washington Democrats were not to be deterred. Working families' budgets took a backseat to the far-left's wish list, and now Democrats' decision is literally driving them off a cliff.

H.R. 3967

Madam President, on another matter, the Senate is in the middle of proposing major legislation to expand healthcare access for veterans exposed to toxic substances in the line of duty. Doing right by our vets is a bipartisan priority. An 86-vote majority of us voted to begin processing this bill a few days back, myself included.

This legislation is not a minor fix; it is a series of major—major—changes to help more veterans. So the precise language of the final bill will have major consequences for veterans, for policy, and for government spending.

Republicans have pushed to get votes on a few commonsense amendments that would make this bipartisan bill even stronger for our veterans. For example, one of these amendments would make sure the veterans who are already in line—those who are waiting now, already in line—waiting for treatment under the current rules are not disserved or treated unfairly as an unintended consequence of the new expansion. Surely that should be completely without controversy.

Another amendment would clarify how the government accounts for the new funding to make sure the new legislation does not impose major unintended consequences on the appropriations process.

Another amendment would make it clear that new medical presumptions must rest on sound science, so Congress does not substitute our judgment for the experts'.

These are not controversial amendments. They are directly related to the substance of this bill. And given the magnitude of the changes under consideration, the Senators sponsoring these amendments have every right to expect votes on the floor. There is no reason why this important bipartisan bill should be denied a bipartisan floor process.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### GUN LEGISLATION

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I got the news, along with others, Sunday morning about the decision of 10 Republican and Democratic Senators to move forward with the proposal to deal with our Nation's epidemic of gun violence. I had a conversation with Senator CHRIS MURPHY, who has been one of our leaders on the Democratic side, about exactly what that meant and the help that we might be able to offer to him from the Senate Judiciary Committee.

I just want to say, at this moment, that I really want to commend my colleagues on both sides, Democrats and Republicans. I believe they made a good-faith effort to negotiate a package of reforms. Senator MURPHY, Senator CORNYN of Texas, made it bipartisan, timely, and I believe did an excellent job. Is it the package that I would have written? No—nor yours, Madam President. You would have included things, and I would have included others. But it is within our reach.

We have a bitterly politically divided nation. That is a fact. We have a Senate Judiciary Committee evenly divided 50–50. We have a Chamber evenly divided 50–50. So it is difficult to say that any one party or one person will get exactly what they want in this political atmosphere, but it is equally important to note that we have all gone home and gotten the message over and over again. Whether it was in reference to the supermarket killing in Buffalo, the fourth grade school class in Uvalde, TX, or the doctor and other bystanders being killed in a Tulsa, OK, hospital, all of that has occurred in the last few days.

The American people have reacted with one voice, and they have said to us two words: “Do something.” To Members of Congress, don't just tell us you are going to give us your thoughts and prayers. Do something.

Well, I think this decision to move forward could help. Every provision in this agreement could save a life. For that reason, if for no other, I will be supporting it.

This agreement would support “red flag” laws. It is one way they characterize them. “Crisis intervention orders” is another. Many States—19—already have them. It would also close dangerous gaps in Federal law that enable domestic abusive boyfriends to get guns.

I want to commend Senator KLOBUCHAR, who has been the leader in the U.S. Senate on that issue. We tried to help her on a previous piece of legislation, and it didn't have the votes to do it, but if it is included in this package, I will definitely support it, and I thank her for her leadership.

It also would strengthen the background check system by clarifying which gun sellers would be required to conduct background checks. That is a step in the right direction. I hope there is more coming.

The agreement would provide funds for desperately needed mental health and trauma support services, including more school counselors for enhanced school safety.

I can't tell you how critically important that is. Half of the people who die because of a gun in America commit suicide. It is a plea for help that we should be answering. This could help. We also know that some of the people who pick up these guns and go shooting children and innocent people have serious mental illness problems. They need counseling, too, and we need to find ways to reach them.

I also want to add that we have a different form of gun violence in big cities like Chicago. Many of these crimes are committed by kids and gangs, and these kids—90 percent-plus of them—have been victims of trauma in their lives. Things have happened to them which they can never forget, and they need help to deal with them. So mental health counseling and trauma counseling are critical to reducing gun violence at all of these different levels.

Importantly, the framework would crack down on the straw purchasing and the illicit trafficking of guns. Last August, an amazing young woman who was a Chicago policewoman, Ella French, was on duty with her partner, sitting in the squad car, when a man walked up and shot her in the head and killed her. Then he shot the other officer and blinded him in one eye. The gun that he used to kill the policewoman was the subject of a straw purchase.

What does that mean? That means that he could never have cleared a background check. He was a convicted felon. So he finds a friend or a girlfriend to go in and buy it—someone who has no criminal record—and then he hands the gun over to him, and he turns around and kills a wonderful Chicago policewoman. The outpouring of sentiment in favor of Ella French and her family was overwhelming.

I hope that we can get this provision, which I have worked on with Senators Collins and Leahy, included in the final passage so as to tighten up the penalties on those who make straw purchases.

If you are going to stand up and lie to buy a gun so that you can give it to someone who can't pass a background check, you ought to pay dearly for that. It cost Ella French her life, and I hope that we stick with this provision all the way through.

The last point is especially important because I have met her mother; I have met the officer who was in the car with her; and I met his family. I know how much this particular incident has meant to each and every one of their lives.

Does an agreement like this do everything that I would like? No, it doesn't, but this, if we can pass it, will be the most significant gun violence reform in 30 years in Congress—30 years. We now have more guns than people in this country. They estimate some 400 million guns. They can't even give me anywhere close to an exact number of how many AR–15s we have in this country. I have heard estimates that people are convinced the number ranges from 10 to 20 million of these AR–15 military assault-type weapons.

We have a long way to go before we reach the finish line, but I want to commend those Senators who have worked so hard to bring us to this point. I will just make it very clear: I am prepared to do everything I can as a Senator and as whip to bring the votes together to get this done as quickly as possible.

#### STUDENT LOAN FORGIVENESS

Now, Madam President, on another matter, 2 weeks ago, the Education Department announced it would wipe out \$5.8 billion in student loan debt owed by 560,000 borrowers who had attended for-profit Corinthian Colleges in the last 20 years. Corinthian Colleges was one of the largest, most corrupt, most unscrupulous companies in the for-profit college industry, but it wasn't alone in its shady dealings—far from it.

So the basic primer on for-profit colleges and universities—the question that you are going to face on the final exam—is this: What two numbers tell the whole story about for-profit colleges and universities? The numbers 8 and 30. What do they mean? Eight percent of high school graduates go to for-profit colleges and universities—8 percent. Thirty percent of all of the student loan defaults in the United States are of students from for-profit colleges and universities.

Why? Why are these students who attend for-profit schools failing to make their student loan payments?

Well, first, these for-profit industry schools charge too much in tuition. The students can't keep up with the debt, so they borrow more. They reach a point where something happens, and they have to drop out—afraid of the debt they have accumulated.

At the next stage, some finish. They take their diplomas from their for-profit schools, and they learn, unfortunately, that they are almost worthless. Westwood College is one of those fraudulent for-profit colleges. It operated 15 campuses in 5 different States, including Illinois—Westwood College. I remember driving out to O'Hare Airport and looking up at the side of one of those tall office buildings. They had a sign for Westwood College, and I thought: What a fraud.

Like the Corinthian Colleges, Westwood used high-pressure sales and marketing tactics and outright lies to pressure students to take on huge amounts of student debt. Students in Westwood's criminal justice program in Illinois were told that a Westwood

criminal justice degree would all but guarantee them a good-paying job with the local police department, maybe even with the FBI. What a lie.

Victoria Vences is one of the thousands of Illinois students who heard those lies and is paying the price for it. Victoria is the first person in her family ever to attend college, and that is the case more often than not. These students come from families with no college experience and don't know where to turn. They look at the advertising and, unfortunately, fall for it. They sign up for these for-profit schools like Westwood.

Victoria enrolled in the criminal justice program at Westwood in 2007, believing it would help her land a job as a probation officer or maybe even with the Immigration Services. After 3 years of juggling full-time jobs and going to school full time, Victoria was shocked to learn that a Westwood degree would not pay off at all. At that time, she owed \$50,000 in student loans that she had taken out at Westwood. Not wanting to take out more loans for a useless degree, she dropped out. She started applying for law enforcement jobs, showing them the certificate of her transcript from Westwood, and they told her that it was worthless.

Victoria now works for the Illinois Domestic Violence Hotline. She likes her job, and she helps a lot of people, but she has never earned enough of an income to make the monthly payments on her student loans. Victoria Vences isn't someone who shirks responsibility. She is helping to raise a niece and a nephew who live with her. She doesn't believe that she should have to pay back \$50,000 in loans because of the deception. I agree.

Last week, I wrote to Education Secretary Miguel Cardona, asking him for a second time—and I like him, but if he doesn't start answering my letters, I am going to have to think of a way to get his attention. I asked him to cancel the student loan debt of all former Westwood criminal justice students in Illinois who were defrauded by this company.

I first made this request in April of last year. It is time for a response, Mr. Secretary.

Last July, the Education Secretary canceled the student loan debts of 1,600 former Westwood students. Among them were 488 Illinois students who had taken on debt to enroll in Westwood's worthless criminal justice program. These students had all applied for relief under something known as borrower defense that allows the Education Department to cancel their student debts.

There are still more than 3,000 Westwood criminal justice students in Illinois who haven't gotten that same break. Some of them, like Victoria Vences, have carried that debt for more than 10 years. It has ruined their credit ratings, and it has made it harder for them to find a job, rent an apartment, or think about a future.

We have known for more than a decade that Westwood used misleading marketing tactics. Now they have to be called to account. The unethical behavior was documented in detail by Illinois' former attorney general, Lisa Madigan, who sued Westwood 10 years ago. I remember that. I joined her in a press conference announcing it.

The Education Department also has concluded that Westwood defrauded its criminal justice program students in Illinois. The Education Department should grant automatic loan forgiveness for all of the approximately 3,000 students who are still burdened with Westwood's criminal justice program deception.

During the Trump years, the Education Department decided to take a blind eye to the situation of these for-profit schools. The Trump administration actually hired people who worked in that industry—for these schools—to regulate them. You can guess what happened—no regulation.

It is time for the Education Department to make a difference, and let me say that it is time for us to make a difference when it comes to student loan debt. It was in 1998 when we decided—in a bill which was loaded with extras that people didn't discover until long after it passed—that you couldn't discard your student loan in bankruptcy. If you had a mortgage on a home and filed for bankruptcy, you could discharge that mortgage, even on a second home, even on a car loan, even on a loan for a boat, even on a loan for appliances—just about everything except a student loan.

Well, that was the wrong decision. That was the wrong policy. There are more than 3 million student loan borrowers who owe more than \$100,000 in student loans, but we have decided these would be nondischargeable in bankruptcy. There is a provision in there that says, if there is an undue hardship, you might be able to discharge your loan. Almost never does a court rule that there is an undue hardship.

This situation is unsustainable. Senator JOHN CORNYN of Texas and I have introduced a bipartisan bill to change it to make sure the Bankruptcy Code gives student debt a break. I will continue working with him and others to get this done. Bankruptcy should always be the last resort, but it ought to be an option for those who truly need relief, and these student borrowers do.

The bottom line: Even with other reform measures, like relief for the Corinthian Colleges students, bankruptcy reform ought to be part of the solution to the student debt crisis. I hope that it will.

H.R. 3967

Madam President, I recently received a letter from a man in Chicago who was writing on behalf of his dad who was a Vietnam war vet, and he was writing for hundreds of thousands of other veterans just like his dad.

These people are sick with illnesses connected to their military service.

These veterans served our Nation in many different wars, in many different places, and at many different times in different branches of the military. They have one thing in common: They were unknowingly poisoned with toxic chemicals during their service. They came home from war and thought they were safe as they managed to escape the fate of some of their colleagues, but years and sometimes decades later, they became sick with rare cancers, with debilitating lung diseases, heart conditions, and other illnesses as a result of toxic exposure during their service.

One veteran said:

It's like an I.E.D. that goes off in your body 8 or 10 or 20 years [after you are out of the service].

Al LaHood, who is not related to the Congressman or the Congressman's son, is the father my constituent wrote to me about. Al was 22 years old when he was drafted in the Army, and he went to Vietnam in 1968. He was an infantryman, a machinegunner, stationed at Camp Cu Chi, northwest of Saigon. He came home after a year, with a Bronze Star for valor, but he brought something else home, although he wouldn't know it for almost 50 years. His body had absorbed Agent Orange, the toxic defoliant used by the U.S. military in Vietnam to clear the jungles.

(Ms. DUCKWORTH assumed the Chair.)

After his service, Al LaHood earned a college degree and an MBA, got married, had a family—the American dream.

Every 2 years, he and his Army buddies made a point of having a reunion somewhere. One by one, over the years, his buddies started getting sick. Heart disease, prostate cancer, esophageal cancer—it turns out all related to the toxic exposure to Agent Orange.

Four years ago, the toxic timebomb caught up with Al LaHood. He was diagnosed with a rare form of non-Hodgkin's lymphoma; last year, even worse news—diagnosed with another rare cancer. Doctors tell him he has a 30-percent chance of surviving 5 years.

The VA ruled that his cancers are service-related and declared Al a hundred percent disabled. It amazes him to think that he now receives more in disability compensation each month than he received in combat pay for an entire year in Vietnam.

"People don't understand the true cost of war," Al says.

Exposure to toxic substances is not new. In World War I, it was mustard gas; World War II, exposure to nuclear tests; Vietnam, Agent Orange. In the Persian Gulf wars and the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, there was a new form of exposure. It was called burn pits. The military dug massive pits, filled them with everything imaginable—from ruined humvees and aircraft to medical waste, human waste, computers, batteries, plastics—every bit of trash produced in a war on a military

base. Then they doused it all with jet fuel and lit it on fire. The thick black smoke from the fire contained invisible deadly chemicals. They filled the air and covered everything around. And the soldiers, they breathed them into their lungs and into their bodies.

Al LaHood's son said his dad was concerned for the veterans from Iraq and Afghanistan. He hopes they receive early screening, so if they develop cancer, this just might be able to save their lives.

Al and his family say they want more research into the kinds of rare cancers and other illnesses that toxic-exposed veterans developed so they can be detected earlier. Al would give up gladly all of his disability payments if the money could be spent on research for illnesses that might hit his fellow victims exposed to toxic substances.

I want Al LaHood and the hundreds of thousands of toxic-exposed veterans, their families, and caregivers to know the U.S. Senate not only honors your service; we hear your voices.

This week, the Senate is taking up SFC Heath Robinson Honoring Our PACT Act. The PACT Act is the most important piece of veterans legislation in a generation. It is about keeping promises, the promises that we made to veterans that if they risked their lives for our Nation and became wounded as a result, that we would not leave them behind; they would have healthcare and benefits they needed and earned.

The PACT Act builds on the historic Agent Orange Act. Let me, at this point, note that a friend of mine, now deceased, was one of the major movers on the Agent Orange Act of 1991. His name was Lane Evans. He was from the Quad Cities in Illinois. He and I were elected to the U.S. House in the same year, 1982.

Lane was a Vietnam-era veteran who came back determined to help his fellow veterans, and he made Agent Orange his cause. He recognized that illnesses caused by Agent Orange are actually war wounds and should be treated that way.

The PACT Act takes that principle that Congressman Lane Evans stood for and applies it to other situations. It applies it to all American veterans from all wars who were exposed to toxic chemicals during their service, whether overseas or in the United States.

As we continue to learn about the cost of exposure, it provides a framework to add more conditions related to toxic exposure in the future. Veterans will no longer have to fight a second war with the VA to prove their illness was service-related. They can focus on fighting their disease instead of fighting the bureaucracy.

It is estimated that the PACT Act will affect 1 out of every 5 veterans—3.5 million veterans in all. The act directs the VA to devote resources and personnel needed to process new claims and treat new patients.

In another provision, which I strongly support, the PACT Act directs the VA to work collaboratively with the Department of Defense and Health and Human Services and EPA—a whole-of-government search for better ways to detect, treat, and cure these hidden deadly wounds of war. Our veterans deserve nothing else.

I have heard some critics say: This is going to cost a lot of money.

Right. It just might do that. But can you think of a more deserving cause? Can you think of anything better than for us to really face the true causes of war than to stand by our veterans?

Madam President, you know that story far better than I do.

I have long supported this whole-of-government approach to research—especially at the VA—and treatment for our veterans.

Many VA researchers are veterans themselves, determined to find innovative treatment and cures.

I commend Senator JON TESTER of Montana and Senator JERRY MORAN—they are the chairman and ranking member of the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee—for their leadership in producing this excellent, timely, and historic bipartisan bill.

I especially thank the more than 60 veteran service organizations, like the VFW—I spoke to their statewide convention in Springfield just last Friday—and so many others that helped produce this bill and the veterans who fought to reach this point—fought sometimes literally with their last breath.

I will vote proudly for the PACT Act. I urge my colleagues to do the same.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### GUN VIOLENCE

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, tomorrow will mark 3 weeks since the devastating school shooting in Uvalde, TX.

Over those last 3 weeks, Senator MURPHY from Connecticut, Senator SINEMA from Arizona, Senator TILLIS from North Carolina, and others have been working to identify steps that Congress should take to prevent similar tragedies from occurring in the future.

This is not an easy debate. It is emotional. It can be divisive, but it is also very important that we act.

Most often, you hear people say: Do something. Well, they don't give you a lot of guidance on what that something looks like. And when you begin to dig down into the details, you find out that there is not a lot of consensus about what that something should look like.

The good news is, as a result of the work we have been doing these last 3

weeks, working with our colleagues, I believe we are making good progress.

Over the weekend, there was an agreement reached between 20 Senators—10 Republicans and 10 Democrats—on a framework, or principles, for bipartisan legislation to keep our kids and our communities safe.

Before I go through some of the details of this agreed framework, I want to explain what it does and what it does not include.

From the beginning, I promised my constituents that when I took an oath to uphold the Constitution and laws of the United States, I did not take that oath with the intention of violating it. And so I said at the outset I would not support any additional restrictions on the rights of law-abiding gun owners.

There are hundreds of millions of guns in America today, and the vast majority—almost all of those gun owners—are responsible. They are not a threat to public safety. And so this being a constitutional right to keep and bear arms, there is no basis to restrict the rights of law-abiding gun owners or to restrict the constitutional rights of many of our citizens.

I made clear this is a redline of mine from the outset. And this bipartisan agreement on principles makes good on that commitment.

The gun-related provisions in this proposal will only impact criminals and those adjudicated mentally ill. Law-abiding gun owners will not be subject to any new restrictions, period.

Our agreement also strengthens the existing background check system, something we have had strong bipartisan support for and where we have had some notable successes in the past, for example, the Fix NICS bill that passed after this tragic Sutherland Springs shooting, where an individual, who should not have been able to get a firearm because of his record of felonies and domestic violence and mental health commitments, was able to do so because the Air Force had not uploaded that information into the background check system.

I am proud of the fact that, on a bipartisan basis, we passed that legislation which compelled Federal Agencies to post this derogatory information, which disqualifies people under current law, into the National Instant Criminal Background Check System. Since 2018, when that bill was signed into law, there have been 11½ million new records uploaded into the background check system.

As I said, our agreement on the background check system in this particular legislation is an attempt to try to make sure that existing law works the way Congress intended. I am very proud of the bipartisan work that led to this framework, and I am eager to share more with my Republican colleagues this week.

The various portions of this proposal can be grouped into three broad categories.

One is mental health support. To prevent violence, we need to improve the

availability and accessibility of mental health services across the country. If you look at the profile of these young, male shooters—whether it is in Sandy Hook or it is in Uvalde, TX—they fit a familiar profile: alienated from their peers, suffering increasingly deteriorating mental health, not getting any treatment. It is like circling down the drain. Unless they get some help, they are likely to do what, unfortunately, too many of our young people do, and that is commit suicide. In the case of Adam Lanza in Sandy Hook and Salvador Ramos in Uvalde, they not only commit suicide—because they know they are not coming out of this alive—but they take innocent lives with them. So access to mental health support is absolutely critical.

So, too, is the investment in our schools. This includes everything from physically hardening school buildings to training personnel, to more effective violence prevention efforts. We know at Uvalde the door had a lock on it but it didn't work, allowing the shooter easy access to this elementary school.

All of our students—all—deserve to feel safe in their schools, and no parent should send their child to school worried that they may not come home. They deserve to know their child will be safe at school and the peace of mind that goes along with that. That is why I think these resources for additional school hardening of that soft target is very important.

The final portion provides targeted reforms to keep guns out of the hands of individuals who already, by law, should not have guns to begin with. Our proposal includes resources for States to implement crisis intervention orders.

Now, some have talked about red flag laws, but that is actually a broader category than red flag laws that exist in 16 States. As I said, some of this assistance for crisis intervention orders will help administer existing red flag laws, but my hope is that others will qualify for these resources for other important measures to help provide support for our communities to aid in crisis intervention, things like assisted outpatient treatment centers. As I said, 16 States have red flag laws. Texas does not, and they certainly shouldn't miss out on access to those resources for crisis intervention.

But one of the things you hear people concerned with most when it comes to these red flag laws where people who are found, after an adjudication, to be a danger to themselves and others and can lose access to their firearms on a temporary basis—it is absolutely critical that each and every one of those includes protection that comes from due process of law and particularly when it comes to the rights of law-abiding gun owners.

Our framework also includes protections for victims of domestic violence. It shouldn't matter whether the victim is married to their abuser; if the abuser is convicted of domestic violence, they

should not be able to purchase a firearm.

Our proposal also cracks down on illegal sellers and manufacturers of firearms, like the man who sold a gun to the shooter who killed 7 people and injured 25 others in Midland and Odessa out in West Texas. The shooter knew he couldn't pass a traditional background test, so he traveled to Lubbock, TX, and purchased a firearm from somebody who made knockoff AR-15s out of parts that he purchased over the internet. And, of course, no background check was done, and tragedy ensued.

Our provisions also include a review of juvenile records for buyers under the age of 21. In Uvalde, Salvador Ramos was able to pass a background check only because no one had any insight—official insight—into his tortured background. I have said before he was a ticking time bomb: somebody who mutilated himself; threatened assaults, including sexual assaults, against his fellow students; somebody who posted pictures online of the weapons that he had bought and threatened online to go shoot up a school.

We need to know before somebody walks in and buys a firearm when they turn 18 what their mental health and criminal record history looks like, to the extent feasible. Then we need to incentivize more States, like the States of South Carolina and Virginia that currently upload mental health adjudications even for juveniles.

To be clear, we agreed on a press statement, a set of principles. That was very important and hard-fought. But now comes the even more difficult task of trying to agree on legislative text to actually implement those principles, and that is what we are working on this week. My hope is that we can complete that job in the next few days—hopefully by the end of the week—so that the bill will be available for all Senators—indeed, all the world—to read, and then Senator SCHUMER will have that available, should he choose to do so, to put it on the floor of the Senate next week.

There has been a lot of talk and speculation in the press about what was included in the bill, and I am pleased to say that I believe the principles we came up with will save lives. To me, that is the ultimate goal, just like the legislation we passed in 2018 to fix the background check system after Sutherland Springs.

I believe the principles we have articulated, if carried out in legislative text, which I expect them to be, will save lives. That is our goal. But we also understand that we are operating here in the Senate with a 60-vote threshold, that 59 votes won't get it and any lesser number will not allow us to vote to close off debate and then to pass a bill. So I want to just talk about ideas that were left out of this deal because we knew they would jeopardize our ability to get to 60 votes.

There was a lot of desire on both sides to include additional things, but

they were excluded in large part because of our necessity of getting to 60 votes in order to get a bill—for example, proposals on universal background checks, assault weapon bans for 18- to 21-year-olds, mandatory waiting periods, a 21-day waiting period for purchases of all firearms for 18- to 21-year-olds, high-capacity magazine bans, unconstitutional mandatory safe storage requirements of all firearms in homes, licensing requirements for purchasing an assault weapon, criminal penalties for negligent storage of firearms in a home, and low mens rea—that is a criminal state of mind—standard for straw purchasing and trafficking firearms.

All of these had been proposed by either President Biden or many of our Democratic colleagues and were not included in the statement of principles that was agreed to by 10 Republicans and 10 Democrats. We knew including any of these components would jeopardize our ability to get a deal. So anytime our Democratic colleagues tried to push the envelope as far as they could, we had to remind them of that requirement and push back.

Again, my view, my redline, my starting point, my premise in all of this is law-abiding gun owners are not the problem. Law-abiding gun owners who have passed a background check have a Second Amendment right to purchase a firearm, and no limitation on their rights is going to prevent shootings like Uvalde or Sandy Hook or Sutherland Springs. So focusing on the problem, which is keeping criminals and people with mental health problems from purchasing firearms under existing law, I believe, is the right formula to build consensus and get a bill on the President's desk.

We are still working, as I said, through a lot of the details, but I am encouraged about where things stand right now. As I said, my goal all along is the art of the possible. That is what politics is; it is the art of the possible. It is not everything I want and nothing you want or everything you want and nothing I want. That is how not to get a deal. That is how not to accomplish anything.

I am hoping that 10 Republicans supporting the bill is not a ceiling but is the floor, and we intend to continue to work with our colleagues to help them understand these principles that we have agreed to, the 20 of us, and to write legislative text that can earn broad bipartisan support, maybe supermajority support, here in the U.S. Senate.

I want to personally thank our colleagues Senator MURPHY, Senator SINEMA, and Senator TILLIS for working in good faith to get us to this point, as well as a number of other Senators who contributed to this bipartisan proposal.

We still have a lot of work ahead of us. I think in many ways this is the beginning—not the middle or the end—of our work because now we need to put



these principles into legislative text, and then we need to get it on the Senate floor, get it passed, get it passed in the House, and then get it to President Biden's desk.

I will be sharing further updates with my colleagues in the Republican conference this week, and I hope, working together with Senator TILLIS and others, to build additional support on our side of the aisle.

#### U.S. SUPREME COURT

Madam President, I just want to close on one final note. The bipartisan work that we have done here in the Senate on this school safety, mental health, and gun safety bill is a sharp contrast from what is happening on the other side of the Capitol. House Democrats, unfortunately, have a history of prioritizing politics over policy, but now, their games have reached a dangerous low. I am talking about the safety and security of the members of the U.S. Supreme Court and their families.

It has been more than a month since the Senate passed bipartisan legislation to protect them from threats of violence. The legislation Mr. COONS, a Senator from Delaware, and I introduced—a bipartisan bill—passed the Senate unanimously. Do you think that happens every day? Not by a long shot. To get all 100 Senators to support a piece of legislation means it is really not controversial. But, unfortunately, once it went to the House, it sat there and languished for a month.

Even as members of the Supreme Court and their families are being threatened, the House hasn't allowed a vote on that bipartisan bill. The reason given by our Democratic colleagues in the House is, well, they want to extend further protection to Court employees and their families. That could include around-the-clock security details for everyone from clerks to IT staff and their spouses, children, siblings, and parents. That makes a mockery of what Senator COONS and I tried to do.

All we wanted to do is give the police at the Supreme Court the very same authority that the Capitol Police have to provide protective details to Members of Congress. In fact, the leadership in both Houses have permanent details assigned to them, but if a Member of Congress receives a credible threat, Capitol Police will provide a protective detail for them. That is all we want to do for the members of the Supreme Court and their families.

Last week, we received a terrifying reminder of the failure to act and what the consequences of that might be. U.S. marshals arrested a man outside of Justice Kavanaugh's home who had traveled all the way from California to assassinate a sitting Justice on the U.S. Supreme Court. When he was arrested, he had a Glock 17 semiautomatic pistol. He had ammunition, a knife, a crowbar, and some zip ties. He told authorities his plan was to break into Justice Kavanaugh's house, kill Justice Kavanaugh, and then commit

suicide. That was his plan. Thank goodness law enforcement authorities were able to stop him.

But this close call immediately set off calls for the House to pass the bipartisan legislation that I was discussing a moment ago—again, that passed unanimously in the Senate a month ago—but unfortunately, House Democrats have still refused to do that. They still claim that the law clerks and other Supreme Court staff who were virtually anonymous to the public are in dire need of protection too. I think this is pretty transparently a stalling tactic. It is a pretty lame excuse for not providing the Supreme Court Justices and their families with the very same protection that Capitol Police provide Members of Congress.

The bill that the Democratic House Members say they want to pass instead was introduced on May 10, almost 5 weeks ago, but they haven't even voted on that bill yet. Again, this is a transparent attempt to stall legislation that passed 100 to 0. If House Democrats actually believed in the snake oil they are trying to sell, they would have passed their own bill a month ago, but they didn't, and they haven't. They wasted precious time and left Justices' families vulnerable to grave danger.

If House Democrats want to vote on a bill that extends protection to other people, including the leaker of the Supreme Court opinion, they are welcome to try to do so, but first, they need to pass the bipartisan bill Senator COONS and I introduced.

The line between legitimate public discourse and acts of violence has been crossed, and House Democrats cannot continue to turn a blind eye. We don't have time to spare when it comes to protecting the members of the Court and their families. If, Heaven forbid, something were to happen because of a lack of authority that would be conferred by the Supreme Court Police Parity Act, shame on Members of the House of Representatives. It would be on them for their failure to act on this commonsense, bipartisan bill.

Madam President, the House needs to pass the Supreme Court Police Parity Act today and, if not today, tomorrow. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

#### FREE SPEECH

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, there has been a lot of well-deserved attention to free expression limits on college campuses. My colleagues have heard me right here on this very Senate floor speak about the need for free expression many times. But one reason we have this issue at colleges is because students aren't exposed to the diverse ideas in our public schools and other K-12 institutions. So when brandnew college students encounter opposing ideas for the first time, you have heard it—they lash out. They demand what are called safe spaces on the college campuses.

Now, that tells me that students are coming to college very unprepared to hear diverse views. If your own views have never been challenged, then you almost certainly have not developed the skills to evaluate different viewpoints and then go ahead and make up your own mind.

So let's raise this question: Why are students arriving in college so resistant to hearing diverse views?

I have been following some news stories on this subject last month, and all of this may not be entirely accidental, that our high school students aren't prepared to hear diverse viewpoints when they get to college.

The American Federation of Teachers recently announced that it wants to put an extension on the computers of its 1.7 million members. The goal of this NewsGuard extension is to provide "trust ratings" of news websites. Although numerous studies have pointed to a clear leftwing bias from NewsGuard, the AFT still wanted to bring it into the classrooms across America. Now, that should not be our goal. Our goal should be to get political bias out of K-12 schools, not ingrain it.

Contrariwise, a major focus that I have heard from Iowa teachers has been that we need to develop among our students critical thinking. Well, critical thinking requires listening to different ideas. If all students just agree with their teachers, that is repetition, not independent thinking.

The disease that has infected so many colleges now seems to spread throughout our K-12 schools. I hope for our country's future we find a way to continue to show kids both sides of an argument rather than shutting down ideas that teachers may disagree with. I have heard from many Iowans concerned about exactly that kind of bias. But we can't fix it here in Washington, DC.

The first rule of education policy should be that decisions are made as close to the family as possible. If you have issues with how your school is being run, your local school board should be your very first step. These elected officials are directly accountable to the parents in their own communities. A problem should only go up to the State legislature if it is caused by State law, and only a select few issues should go to this national level, where Federal intervention is found out to be the source of the problem.

So if you see political bias or lack of diverse viewpoints in your kids' school, go to the people who can fix it. Make your voice heard both at school board meetings and at the ballot box.

#### BORDER SECURITY

Madam President, on another subject, we had the good fortune of hearing a series of speeches last week led by my colleague from Iowa, JONI ERNST, on the critical situation at our southern border, with people violating our laws, coming into this country, and almost being invited into this country in violation of our laws because our



laws say you need the permission of the United States to come to this country.

So I didn't speak last week on that subject, but, as I have done on a number of occasions otherwise, I want to once again come to my colleagues about the border crisis created by President Biden, Secretary Mayorkas, and maybe more throughout this administration.

The crisis at our southern border is one of the top issues I hear at my county meetings. Iowans are understandably upset by President Biden's policies that have incentivized illegal immigration and created a historic crisis at the southern border.

In the first 15 months of this administration, U.S. Customs and Border Protection—CBP, as we call it—has experienced over 2.7 million encounters with illegal immigrants at the southern border. That number is staggering. It is larger than the population of 15 States and Washington, DC. It is almost three times larger than the President's home State of Delaware.

Make no mistake about it, this crisis is entirely the fault of President Biden and the policies that he put in place almost his first day in office.

Since taking office, this administration has terminated physical barrier construction at the southern border. In other words, the wall that works to keep people from entering our country was stopped being built.

Next, this administration attempted to severely limit the ability of ICE to deport illegal immigrants; also attempted to terminate the "Remain in Mexico" policy; rolled back asylum co-operative agreements; openly supported sanctuary city policies; embraced mass catch-and-release policies; put forward mass-amnesty legislative proposals that would do nothing to secure the border; and even attempted to terminate title 42 without any plan in place to deal with what happened when we increased the number of people illegally crossing our border from about 6 to 7,000 a day to 18,000 a day, and that figure comes from the estimates of our own executive branch government.

Now, listing all these things, therefore, it shouldn't be a surprise to see a record-shattering surge of illegal immigration at our southern border. This is what happens when you make it clear that you have no intention of fully enforcing the Nation's immigration laws or cracking down on illegal immigration.

As I have said before, it is an unfortunate reality that the President and his administration believe the surge in illegal immigration at the southern border due to his policies is a process to be managed rather than a crisis to be stopped. Until that mindset changes, this historic crisis at our southern border will continue. And President Biden, Secretary Mayorkas, and the irresponsible and reckless policies of this administration deserve all of the blame for the situation that we are in.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MORAN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

H.R. 3967

Mr. MORAN. Madam President, as you know, the Senate is currently considering the Heath Robinson Honoring Our PACT Act. This bipartisan legislation is the most comprehensive toxic exposure bill ever considered for veterans.

My colleagues deserve a fair consideration of common sense and reasonable amendments to improve this bill for our veterans. The House of Representatives had six votes and adopted 27 amendments. Part of the agreement between the chairman, Chairman TESTER, and I was that amendments would be considered for this legislation; and, specifically, I have pushed for two amendments to be considered.

Given the magnitude and size of this legislation, there needs to be a bipartisan process, and given the magnitude of the bipartisan support of this legislation, there needs to be a bipartisan process on the Senate floor; and I would ask the leadership of the Senate to make certain that is the case.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. TESTER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. TESTER. Madam President, the Senate has a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to pass bipartisan legislation this week. The Sergeant First Class Heath Robinson Honoring Our PACT Act will honor this country's commitment to our country's toxin-exposed veterans and their families.

Generation after generation of veterans have been exposed to toxic substances during their time serving this country. And when they return from their military service, they have faced yet another battle right here at home—that battle to get the care and benefits that they have earned and that they desperately need.

In the worst cases, folks are praying and praying with the price of their lives—veterans and heroes like SFC Heath Robinson, for whom this bill is named. Like many Americans, Heath answered the call of duty and deployed to Kosovo and Iraq with the Ohio National Guard.

When he deployed, he was a healthy and active soldier. While deployed, he was exposed to toxins from burn pits. And 13 years—13 short years—after his

deployment, he lost his life to a rare autoimmune disease and stage 4 lung cancer, conditions undoubtedly related to his exposure to toxins from burn pits while he was on active duty serving this Nation.

Heath left behind an 8-year-old daughter. He also left behind a wife and family. And this family is now committed to ensuring that this country provides for other veterans what it could not provide for Heath—the support he needed to survive.

This bill will address decades of inaction and failure by our Government. It expands eligibility for VA healthcare to more than 3½ million combat veterans exposed to burn pits, supporting our post-9/11 and Vietnam-era veterans by removing the burden of proof for 23 presumptive conditions caused by toxic exposure, from cancers to lung disease.

It establishes a framework for the establishment of future presumptions of service-related toxic exposures, giving the VA the tools it needs to bolster its workforce, establish more healthcare facilities, and improve the claims process to better meet the immediate and future needs of every veteran that the VA serves.

There is always a cost to war. And we often look at it with ships and airplanes and tanks, but the fact is, the cost of the wars we have fought are never fully paid. This bill will help right that wrong.

Congress has a chance to show our Nation's veterans that their government has their back. Our men and women in uniform answered the call of duty. The Presiding Officer of the Senate knows exactly what I am talking about. They upheld their end of the bargain; we need to uphold ours.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. TESTER. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. TESTER. I ask unanimous consent that we yield back all time and the vote occur right now.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on Tester substitute amendment No. 5051 to Calendar No. 388, H.R. 3967, a bill to improve health care and benefits for veterans exposed to toxic substances, and for other purposes.

Charles E. Schumer, Jon Tester, Tammy Duckworth, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Margaret Wood Hassan, Kyrsten Sinema,

Mark Kelly, Christopher Murphy, Sherrod Brown, Tina Smith, Jacky Rosen, Benjamin L. Cardin, Jack Reed, Tammy Baldwin, Jeanne Shaheen, Mazie Hirono, Ben Ray Lujan.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on amendment No. 5051, offered by the Senator from Montana, Mr. TESTER, to H.R. 3967, a bill to improve health care and benefits for veterans exposed to toxic substances, and for other purposes, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Georgia (Mr. WARNOCK) is necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ), the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. KENNEDY), the Senator from Nebraska (Mr. SASSE), and the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER).

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 78, nays 17, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 225 Leg.]

#### YEAS—78

Baldwin	Fischer	Murkowski
Barrasso	Gillibrand	Murphy
Bennet	Graham	Murray
Blumenthal	Grassley	Ossoff
Blunt	Hagerty	Padilla
Booker	Hassan	Peters
Boozman	Hawley	Reed
Braun	Heinrich	Rosen
Brown	Hickenlooper	Rounds
Cantwell	Hirono	Rubio
Capito	Hoeven	Sanders
Cardin	Hyde-Smith	Schatz
Carper	Inhofe	Schumer
Casey	Johnson	Scott (FL)
Cassidy	Kaine	Shaheen
Collins	Kelly	Sinema
Coons	King	Smith
Cornyn	Klobuchar	Stabenow
Cortez Masto	Leahy	Tester
Cotton	Lujan	Thune
Cramer	Manchin	Van Hollen
Daines	Markey	Warner
Duckworth	Marshall	Warren
Durbin	Menendez	Whitehouse
Ernst	Merkley	Wyden
Feinstein	Moran	Young

#### NAYS—17

Blackburn	McConnell	Shelby
Burr	Paul	Sullivan
Crapo	Portman	Tillis
Lankford	Risch	Toomey
Lee	Romney	Tuberville
Lummis	Scott (SC)	

#### NOT VOTING—5

Cruz	Sasse	Wicker
Kennedy	Warnock	

(Mr. SCHATZ assumed the Chair.)

(Ms. BALDWIN assumed the Chair.)

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HEINRICH). On this vote, the yeas are 78, the nays are 17.

Three-fifths of the Senators duly chosen and sworn having voted in the affirmative, the motion is agreed to.

The Senator from Arizona.

## EXECUTIVE SESSION

### EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Ms. SINEMA. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session to consider the following nominations en bloc: Calendar Nos. 990, 991, and 992; that the Senate vote on the nominations en bloc without intervening action or debate; that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon table; that any statements related to the nominations be printed in the RECORD; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action; and the Senate resume legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nominations of Joshua D. Hurwit, of Idaho, to be United States Attorney for the District of Idaho, for the term of four years; Gerard M. Karam, of Pennsylvania, to be United States Attorney for the Middle District of Pennsylvania for the term of four years; and Jacqueline C. Romero, of Pennsylvania, to be United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania for the term of four years en bloc?

The nominations were confirmed en bloc.

## LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will now resume legislative session.

## MORNING BUSINESS

### 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF JUNETEENTH IN PORTLAND, OREGON

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, Senator MERKLEY and I wish to recognize the 50th anniversary of the Juneteenth Oregon Celebration in our hometown of Portland, OR. Every year on June 19, people in Portland and across the State of Oregon and the Nation join together to celebrate when, on June 19, 1865, more than 250,000 enslaved people in Texas were finally declared free more than 2 years after the signing of the Emancipation Proclamation. Juneteenth is a celebration of freedom and recognition that emancipation was delayed for many enslaved people even after the Civil War was over. This day is among the most important days of commemoration in our Nation.

The Juneteenth celebration was brought to Oregon in 1945 by the late and beloved community leader Clara Peoples. She led the first-ever Juneteenth celebration in Oregon at work. When her supervisor told her that if the celebration ran over 15 minutes she would be fired, she announced to her coworkers, "Hear ye, hear ye. It's Juneteenth. We have 15 minutes to

celebrate." Thanks to Clara's tireless efforts in the community and her work to create the nonprofit organization Juneteenth OR, the first official city-wide celebration of Juneteenth occurred 50 years ago on June 19, 1972—and is today celebrated with a parade and other festivities like delicious food, art and live music.

Clara Peoples continued fighting for her community by lobbying at all levels of government to make Juneteenth a recognized holiday on the State and national level. While, sadly, Clara did not live to see her efforts realized, she clearly paved the way for Juneteenth to at long last be declared a Federal holiday and a State holiday in Oregon. Today, we remember and honor her as, in the words of the Rev. Dr. Ronald Myers, "the mother of Juneteenth."

Soon after Clara Peoples passed away in 2015, her granddaughters Jenelle Jack and Jynnefer Robinson took over as leaders of Juneteenth OR. Jenelle and Jynnefer continue to champion this special and important event, creating and coordinating online celebrations for 2 years during the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic. They even sent Oregon's candidate for last year's Miss Juneteenth, Aceia Spade from Eugene, OR, to Galveston, TX, where she was crowned National Miss Juneteenth Queen. It was through Jenelle and Jynnefer's efforts—and the efforts of the dedicated staff and volunteers of Juneteenth OR—that Portlanders and Oregonians across the State will once again be able to celebrate Juneteenth in person this year. We look forward to another Clara Peoples Freedom Trail Parade this year, as well as another Miss Juneteenth competition where young Black women will have the opportunity to showcase who they are, their talents, and their confidence.

While celebrating a victory in the fight to keep the film "Birth of a Nation," which celebrated the terrorism of the Ku Klux Klan, from being played in Portland, another Oregon hero and notable civil rights advocate Beatrice Morrow Cannady said, "human rights, the greatest of all rights, and human happiness once again triumphed." So we want to say that when enslaved people in Texas finally learned that they were free, human rights and human happiness triumphed. When Juneteenth became a citywide celebration in Portland 50 years ago, human rights and human happiness triumphed. When Juneteenth became a national holiday in 2021, human rights and human happiness triumphed. And now, on the 50th anniversary of Portland's first Juneteenth and the first time that Oregon has recognized this important day as a State holiday, human rights and human happiness have triumphed.

Juneteenth is an opportunity to celebrate the emancipation of Black Americans and progress made in the fight for human rights and human happiness. It is also a reminder, however, that the fight for true equity for all Americans is far from over. Together, we must

press forward and never stop until all are equal.

#### ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

##### REMEMBERING JOSEPH L. MURCHISON, JR.

• Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, I rise today with a heavy heart to pay tribute to Joseph L. “Joe” Murchison, Jr., an extraordinary public servant who passed away last year and who would have turned 92 on June 19, 2022.

Joe was born in North Carolina in 1930 and enlisted as early as he could in the U.S. Army. Determined to commit himself to his Nation, Joe eventually joined the all-Black 555th Parachute Infantry Battalion. The members of this battalion were called the “Triple Nickles.”

In 1947, a year before the Army was desegregated, Major General James Gavin oversaw the troopers’ transfer into the 3rd Battalion, 505th Parachute Infantry Regiment. This was the first step toward integrating the 82nd Airborne Division and made the Triple Nickles some of the first Black soldiers to train alongside White soldiers.

Even after this trailblazing shift, the troopers continued to consider themselves Triple Nickles. Despite the racial separation of most soldiers, the paratroopers gained the respect of many units as a result of their special airborne status. As Joe said, “We knew we had something to prove and we had to be better than the best.”

In 1958, Joe retired from the military as an officer. He followed his impressive service by starting several successful businesses across the United States and helping to found a newspaper in Greensboro called the “Carolina Peacemaker.” As part of these endeavors, Joe was one of the first Black owners of a North Carolina automobile dealership and worked with a major car manufacturer to promote an alternative fuel vehicle.

Joe founded the 555th Parachute Infantry Association, Inc., in 1979. The organization enables the paratroopers to stay connected. Throughout his three terms as president of the association, Joe saw it grow to include over 1,500 members across 26 chapters.

Throughout his remarkable lifetime, Joe dedicated himself to sharing the importance of the Triple Nickles, even visiting the White House. While he was alive, Joe was pleased to see Juneteenth—also his birthday—be named a Federal holiday by President Biden. He passed away on November 11, 2021, Veterans Day.

My wife Cynthia and I extend our best wishes to his daughter, Joelle, along with her 10 siblings, as well as Joe’s grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and great-great-grandchildren as they celebrate his outstanding life this Sunday. I hope my colleagues will join me in recognizing Joseph L. Murchison, Jr. •

#### MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Ms. Roberts, one of his secretaries.

#### PRESIDENTIAL MESSAGES

##### REPORT ON THE CONTINUATION OF THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY THAT WAS ORIGINALLY DECLARED IN EXECUTIVE ORDER 13219 OF JUNE 26, 2001, WITH RESPECT TO THE WESTERN BALKANS—PM 32

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States, together with an accompanying report; which was referred to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs:

##### *To the Congress of the United States:*

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, within 90 days prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent to the *Federal Register* for publication the enclosed notice stating that the national emergency with respect to the Western Balkans that was declared in Executive Order 13219 of June 26, 2001, under which additional steps were taken in Executive Order 13304 of May 28, 2003, and which was expanded in scope in Executive Order 14033 of June 8, 2021, is to continue in effect beyond June 26, 2022.

The acts of extremist violence and obstructionist activity, and the situation in the Western Balkans, which stymies progress toward effective and democratic governance and full integration into transatlantic institutions, outlined in these Executive Orders, continue to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States. Therefore, I have determined that it is necessary to continue the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13219 with respect to the Western Balkans.

JOSEPH R. BIDEN, JR.  
THE WHITE HOUSE, June 13, 2022.

##### REPORT OF THE CONTINUATION OF THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY THAT WAS ORIGINALLY DECLARED IN EXECUTIVE ORDER 13405 OF JUNE 16, 2006, WITH RESPECT TO BELARUS—PM 33

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States, together with an accompanying report; which was referred to the Com-

mittee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs:

##### *To the Congress of the United States:*

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, within 90 days prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent to the *Federal Register* for publication the enclosed notice stating that the national emergency with respect to Belarus that was declared in Executive Order 13405 of June 16, 2006, which was expanded in scope in Executive Order 14038 of August 9, 2021, is to continue in effect beyond June 16, 2022.

The actions and policies of certain members of the Government of Belarus and other persons, and the Belarusian regime’s harmful activities and longstanding abuses, continue to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States. Therefore, I have determined that it is necessary to continue the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13405 with respect to Belarus.

JOSEPH R. BIDEN, JR.  
THE WHITE HOUSE, June 13, 2022.

##### REPORT OF THE CONTINUATION OF THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY THAT WAS ORIGINALLY DECLARED IN EXECUTIVE ORDER 13466 OF JUNE 26, 2008, WITH RESPECT TO NORTH KOREA—PM 34

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States, together with an accompanying report; which was referred to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs:

##### *To the Congress of the United States:*

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, within 90 days prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent to the *Federal Register* for publication the enclosed notice stating that the national emergency with respect to North Korea that was declared in Executive Order 13466 of June 26, 2008, expanded in scope in Executive Order 13551 of August 30, 2010, addressed further in Executive Order 13570 of April 18, 2011, further expanded in scope in Executive Order 13687 of January 2, 2015, and under which additional steps were taken in Executive Order 13722 of March 15, 2016, and Executive Order 13810 of September 20, 2017, is to continue in effect beyond June 26, 2022.

The existence and risk of the proliferation of weapons-usable fissile material on the Korean Peninsula; the actions and policies of the Government of North Korea that destabilize the Korean Peninsula and imperil United States Armed Forces, allies, and trading partners in the region, including its pursuit of nuclear and missile programs; and other provocative, destabilizing, and repressive actions and policies of the Government of North Korea, continue to constitute an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the United States.

For this reason, I have determined that it is necessary to continue the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13466 with respect to North Korea.

JOSEPH R. BIDEN, Jr.  
THE WHITE HOUSE, June 13, 2022.

### ENROLLED BILLS PRESENTED

The Secretary of the Senate reported that on June 9, 2022, she had presented to the President of the United States the following enrolled bills:

S. 66. An act to require the Inter-Agency Task Force on Harmful Algal Blooms and Hypoxia to develop a plan for reducing, mitigating, and controlling harmful algal blooms and hypoxia in South Florida, and for other purposes.

S. 1097. An act to establish a Federal rotational cyber workforce program for the Federal cyber workforce.

S. 2201. An act to manage supply chain risk through counterintelligence training, and for other purposes.

S. 2520. An act to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to provide for engagements with State, local, Tribal, and territorial governments, and for other purposes.

S. 3823. An act to amend title 11, United States Code, to modify the eligibility requirements for a debtor under chapter 13, and for other purposes.

### EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC-4278. A communication from the Associate Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Teflubenzuron; Pesticide Tolerances" (FRL No. 9636-01-OCSP) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 7, 2022; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-4279. A communication from the Associate Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Picarbutrazox; Pesticide Tolerances" (FRL No. 9849-01-OCSP) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 7, 2022; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-4280. A communication from the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "Implementing Interagency Working Group (IWG) Recommendations on

Improving the Consultation Process Required Under Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act for Pesticide Registration and Registration Review"; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-4281. A communication from the Assistant Administrator, Food Safety and Inspection Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Elimination of the Requirement To Defibrinate Livestock Blood Saved as an Edible Product" (RIN0583-AD81) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 7, 2022; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-4282. A communication from the Assistant Administrator, Food Safety and Inspection Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Inspection of Yak and Other Bovidae, Cervidae, and Camelidae Species" (RIN0583-AD80) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 7, 2022; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-4283. A communication from the Assistant Administrator, Food Safety and Inspection Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Removal of 9 CFR 355- Certified Products for Dogs, Cats, and Other Carnivora; Inspection, Certification, and Identification as to Class, Quality, Quantity, and Condition" (RIN0583-AD83) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 7, 2022; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-4284. A communication from the Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness), transmitting the report of an officer authorized to wear the insignia of the grade of lieutenant general in accordance with title 10, United States Code, section 777; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-4285. A communication from the Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness), transmitting the report of seventeen (17) officers authorized to wear the insignia of the grade of brigadier general in accordance with title 10, United States Code, section 777; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-4286. A communication from the Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness), transmitting the report of an officer authorized to wear the insignia of the grade of vice admiral in accordance with title 10, United States Code, section 777; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-4287. A communication from the Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness), transmitting the report of an officer authorized to wear the insignia of the grade of brigadier general in accordance with title 10, United States Code, section 777; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-4288. A communication from the Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness), transmitting the report of eight (8) officers authorized to wear the insignia of the grade of brigadier general in accordance with title 10, United States Code, section 777; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-4289. A communication from the Secretary of Defense, transmitting a report on the approved retirement of Vice Admiral Ross A. Myers, United States Navy, and his advancement to the grade of vice admiral on the retired list; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-4290. A communication from the Secretary of Defense, transmitting a report on the approved retirement of Lieutenant General Dennis A. Crall, United States Marine Corps, and his advancement to the grade of lieutenant general on the retired list; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-4291. A communication from the Under Secretary of Defense (Acquisition and

Sustainment), transmitting, pursuant to law, the Defense Environmental Programs Annual Report for fiscal year 2020; to the Committee on Armed Services.

### INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. MARSHALL:

S. 4378. A bill to reauthorize a provision of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act pertaining to drugs containing single enantiomers; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. PETERS (for himself and Mrs. BLACKBURN):

S. 4379. A bill to include State active duty in the calculation of creditable service for members of the National Guard under certain circumstances; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Ms. WARREN (for herself, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, and Mr. KING):

S. 4380. A bill to transition the nontactical vehicle fleet of the Department of Defense to electric or other zero emission vehicles, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. WARNER (for himself and Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina):

S. 4381. A bill to amend titles XVIII and XIX of the Social Security Act with respect to nursing facility requirements, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. PADILLA (for himself, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, and Mr. ROMNEY):

S. 4382. A bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in commemoration of the 2028 Olympic and Paralympic Games in Los Angeles, California; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. PADILLA (for himself and Mrs. FEINSTEIN):

S. 4383. A bill to provide assistance for surface transportation projects relating to international Olympic, Paralympic, and Special Olympics events; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. COONS (for himself, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. KING, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. KELLY, and Mr. CASSIDY):

S. 4384. A bill to authorize the Secretary of Education to make grants to support educational programs in civics and history, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. BRAUN:

S. 4385. A bill to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to allow waivers of annual establishment registration fees for small businesses, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. BRAUN (for himself and Mr. HICKENLOOPER):

S. 4386. A bill to allow for devices with a predetermined change control plan to be marketed without submitting a supplemental application or premarket notification if the changes to such devices are consistent with such plan; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Ms. DUCKWORTH:

S. 4387. A bill to provide for the procurement of parts for commercially derived aircraft; to the Committee on Armed Services.

## ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 749

At the request of Ms. HASSAN, the names of the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS) and the Senator from Iowa (Ms. ERNST) were added as cosponsors of S. 749, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to enhance tax benefits for research activities.

S. 1125

At the request of Ms. STABENOW, the name of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. COTTON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1125, a bill to recommend that the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Innovation test the effect of a dementia care management model, and for other purposes.

S. 1175

At the request of Mr. BURR, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1175, a bill to categorize public safety telecommunications as a protective service occupation under the Standard Occupational Classification System.

S. 1183

At the request of Mr. SCHATZ, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1183, a bill to allow veterans to use, possess, or transport medical marijuana and to discuss the use of medical marijuana with a physician of the Department of Veterans Affairs as authorized by a State or Indian Tribe, and for other purposes.

S. 1217

At the request of Ms. WARREN, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1217, a bill to amend the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 to require certain disclosures relating to climate change, and for other purposes.

S. 1544

At the request of Mr. GRASSLEY, the names of the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS) and the Senator from Arizona (Ms. SINEMA) were added as cosponsors of S. 1544, a bill to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to streamline enrollment under the Medicaid program of certain providers across State lines, and for other purposes.

S. 1558

At the request of Mr. BLUMENTHAL, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1558, a bill to amend chapter 44 of title 18, United States Code, to ensure that all firearms are traceable, and for other purposes.

S. 1561

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1561, a bill to amend title 5, United States Code, to limit the number of local wage areas allowable within a General Schedule pay locality.

S. 1873

At the request of Mr. CRAPO, the name of the Senator from Colorado

(Mr. HICKENLOOPER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1873, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for Medicare coverage of multicancer early detection screening tests.

S. 2497

At the request of Ms. WARREN, the name of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2497, a bill to amend title 11, United States Code, to prohibit nonconsensual release of a nondebtor entity's liability to an entity other than the debtor, and for other purposes.

S. 2607

At the request of Mr. PADILLA, the name of the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. BARRASSO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2607, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal to the former hostages of the Iran Hostage Crisis of 1979–1981, highlighting their resilience throughout the unprecedented ordeal that they lived through and the national unity it produced, marking 4 decades since their 444 days in captivity, and recognizing their sacrifice to the United States.

S. 2691

At the request of Mr. REED, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2691, a bill to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to ensure adequate access to vaccines under the Medicaid program and the Vaccines for Children program, and for other purposes.

S. 2706

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the names of the Senator from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACKBURN) and the Senator from Maryland (Mr. VAN HOLLEN) were added as cosponsors of S. 2706, a bill to improve diversity in clinical trials and data collection for COVID-19 and future public health threats to address social determinants of health.

S. 2710

At the request of Mrs. BLACKBURN, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. DAINES) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2710, a bill to promote competition and reduce gatekeeper power in the app economy, increase choice, improve quality, and reduce costs for consumers.

S. 2730

At the request of Mr. PADILLA, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2730, a bill to direct the Secretary of Education to establish a pilot grant program to develop, implement, and evaluate comprehensive mental health services programs in elementary schools and secondary schools, and for other purposes.

S. 2790

At the request of Mr. HAGERTY, the name of the Senator from Idaho (Mr. CRAPO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2790, a bill to amend the Consumer Financial Protection Act of 2010 to subject the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection to the regular appropriations process, and for other purposes.

S. 3018

At the request of Mr. MARSHALL, the names of the Senator from Wyoming (Ms. LUMMIS) and the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) were added as cosponsors of S. 3018, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to establish requirements with respect to the use of prior authorization under Medicare Advantage plans, and for other purposes.

S. 3131

At the request of Mr. HAWLEY, the name of the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3131, a bill to accelerate deployment by Taiwan of the asymmetric defense capabilities required to deter or, if necessary, defeat an invasion of Taiwan by the People's Republic of China, and for other purposes.

S. 3417

At the request of Mr. BENNET, the names of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) and the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) were added as cosponsors of S. 3417, a bill to prohibit discrimination against individuals with disabilities who need long-term services and supports, and for other purposes.

S. 3934

At the request of Mrs. HYDE-SMITH, the name of the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3934, a bill to permit policyholders under the National Flood Insurance Program to elect to have previous premium rates remain in effect until the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency satisfies certain conditions, and for other purposes.

S. 4052

At the request of Mr. PORTMAN, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 4052, a bill to reauthorize a program for early detection, diagnosis, and treatment regarding deaf and hard-of-hearing newborns, infants, and young children, and for other purposes.

S. 4105

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the names of the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. CRAMER) and the Senator from Iowa (Ms. ERNST) were added as cosponsors of S. 4105, a bill to treat certain liquidations of new motor vehicle inventory as qualified liquidations of LIFO inventory for purposes of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.

S. 4120

At the request of Mr. REED, the names of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN), the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW), the Senator from Idaho (Mr. RISCH), the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE), the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER) and the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) were added as cosponsors of S. 4120, a bill to maximize discovery, and accelerate development and availability, of promising childhood cancer treatments, and for other purposes.

S. 4179

At the request of Mrs. FEINSTEIN, the name of the Senator from Nevada (Ms. ROSEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 4179, a bill to establish the Space National Guard.

S. 4278

At the request of Mrs. FEINSTEIN, the names of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS), the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN) and the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. REED) were added as cosponsors of S. 4278, a bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to prohibit the purchase of certain firearms by individuals under 21 years of age, and for other purposes.

S. 4370

At the request of Mr. INHOFE, the names of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. THUNE), the Senator from Iowa (Ms. ERNST) and the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. HOEVEN) were added as cosponsors of S. 4370, a bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to provide for extensions of detention of certain aliens ordered removed, and for other purposes.

S. RES. 638

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the names of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. PORTMAN) and the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 638, a resolution commending the Government and people of the Republic of Moldova for their heroic efforts to support Ukrainian refugees fleeing President Putin's illegal war against Ukraine.

AMENDMENT NO. 5072

At the request of Ms. ERNST, the name of the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. CRAMER) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 5072 intended to be proposed to H.R. 3967, a bill to improve health care and benefits for veterans exposed to toxic substances, and for other purposes.

#### STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. PADILLA (for himself, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, and Mr. ROMNEY):

S. 4382. A bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in commemoration of the 2028 Olympic and Paralympic Games in Los Angeles, California; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. PADILLA (for himself and Mrs. FEINSTEIN):

S. 4383. A bill to provide assistance for surface transportation projects relating to international Olympic, Paralympic, and Special Olympics events; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

Mr. PADILLA. Mr. President, I rise to speak in support of the Transportation Assistance for Olympic Cities Act and the LA28 Olympic and Paralympic Games Commemorative Coin Act, which I introduced today.

While the eyes of the world will be on the Olympic and Paralympic Games in

Los Angeles in 2028, the work preparing our region for this grand stage is already starting. That is why I am proud to introduce these bills that will help carry out the Games and make investments in the region and across our Nation.

The Transportation Assistance for Olympic Cities Act would ensure the Federal Government provides critical assistance for surface transportation projects and plans relating to international Olympic, Paralympic, and Special Olympics events. The transportation plans made in the coming years will not only make the Olympics and Paralympics run smoothly but will also be an investment in infrastructure that will benefit commuters and the region for years to come.

This bill would also allow the Department of Transportation to prioritize Federal transportation grants for projects relating to an Olympic, Paralympic, or Special Olympics International event and to provide funding for temporary facilities, equipment, operations, and maintenance that meet the extraordinary needs associated with hosting such events.

The LA28 Olympic and Paralympic Games Commemorative Coin Act would direct the Treasury Department to mint coins in commemoration of the ninth time that the United States will host the modern Olympics and the third time that our Nation will host the Paralympics. This bill would come at no cost to the Federal Government. Any surcharges from the sale of the coins would support the hosting of the 2028 Games and aid in the execution of legacy programs, including the promotion of youth sports in the United States.

I want to thank Representative BROWNLEY and Representative SHERMAN for co-leading these bills with me, and I hope our colleagues will join us in support of these bills that will help Los Angeles, California, and our entire Nation prepare for the successful administration of the 2028 Olympics and Paralympics.

#### AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 5077. Mr. LANKFORD submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 5051 proposed by Mr. TESTER (for himself and Mr. MORAN) to the bill H.R. 3967, to improve health care and benefits for veterans exposed to toxic substances, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 5078. Mr. MORAN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 5051 proposed by Mr. TESTER (for himself and Mr. MORAN) to the bill H.R. 3967, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 5079. Mr. MORAN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 5051 proposed by Mr. TESTER (for himself and Mr. MORAN) to the bill H.R. 3967, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 5080. Ms. ERNST submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 5051 proposed by Mr. TESTER (for himself and Mr. MORAN) to the bill H.R. 3967, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 5081. Mr. CARPER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 5051 proposed by Mr. TESTER (for himself and Mr. MORAN) to the bill H.R. 3967, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 5082. Mr. CARPER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 5051 proposed by Mr. TESTER (for himself and Mr. MORAN) to the bill H.R. 3967, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 5083. Mr. CARPER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 5051 proposed by Mr. TESTER (for himself and Mr. MORAN) to the bill H.R. 3967, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 5084. Mr. CARPER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 5051 proposed by Mr. TESTER (for himself and Mr. MORAN) to the bill H.R. 3967, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 5085. Mr. PAUL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3967, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 5086. Mr. LANKFORD submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 5051 proposed by Mr. TESTER (for himself and Mr. MORAN) to the bill H.R. 3967, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 5087. Mr. SCHUMER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3967, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 5088. Mr. SCHUMER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3967, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 5089. Mr. SCHUMER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3967, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 5090. Mr. SCHUMER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3967, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 5091. Mr. SCHUMER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3967, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 5092. Mr. SCHUMER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3967, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 5093. Mr. SCHUMER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3967, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 5094. Mr. INHOFE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 5051 proposed by Mr. TESTER (for himself and Mr. MORAN) to the bill H.R. 3967, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

#### TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

**SA 5077.** Mr. LANKFORD submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 5051 proposed by Mr. TESTER (for himself and Mr. MORAN) to the bill H.R. 3967, to improve health care and benefits for veterans exposed to toxic substances, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 72, strike lines 10 through 15, and insert the following:

(E) Pre-existing health status of the veteran, including with respect to asthma, tobacco use, and diet.

(F) Relevant personal information of the veteran.

**SA 5078.** Mr. MORAN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 5051 proposed by Mr.



TESTER (for himself and Mr. MORAN) to the bill H.R. 3967, to improve health care and benefits for veterans exposed to toxic substances, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Beginning on page 118, strike line 9 and all that follows through page 120, line 7, and insert the following:

“(c) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—(1) There is authorized to be appropriated to the Fund for fiscal year 2023 through fiscal year 2031 such sums as are necessary, pursuant to the limitation in paragraph (2), to increase funding, over the fiscal year 2021 level, for investment in—

“(A) the delivery of veterans’ health care associated with exposure to environmental hazards in the active military, naval, air, or space service in programs administered by the Under Secretary for Health;

“(B) any expenses incident to the delivery of veterans’ health care and benefits associated with exposure to environmental hazards in the active military, naval, air, or space service, including administrative expenses, such as information technology and claims processing and appeals, and excluding leases as authorized or approved under section 8104 of this title; and

“(C) medical and other research relating to exposure to environmental hazards.

“(2) LIMITATION.—For the period of fiscal years 2023 through 2031, amounts authorized to be appropriated to the Fund may not exceed a cumulative total of \$116,800,000,000.

“(d) BUDGET SCOREKEEPING.—(1) Immediately upon enactment of the Sergeant First Class Heath Robinson Honoring our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics Act of 2022, expenses authorized to be appropriated to the Fund in subsection (c) shall be estimated for fiscal year 2023 through fiscal year 2031 and treated as budget authority that is considered to be direct spending—

“(A) in the baseline for purposes of section 257 of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 (2 U.S.C. 907);

“(B) by the Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate and the Chair of the Committee on the Budget of the House of Representatives, as appropriate, for purposes of budget enforcement in the Senate and the House of Representatives;

“(C) under the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 (2 U.S.C. 621 et seq.), including in the reports required by section 308(b) of such Act (2 U.S.C. 639); and

“(D) for purposes of the Statutory Pay-As-You-Go Act of 2010 (2 U.S.C. 931 et seq.).

“(2)(A) Except as provided in subparagraph (B), amounts appropriated to the Fund for fiscal years 2023 through 2031 pursuant to this section shall be counted as direct spending under the Congressional Budget and Impoundment Control Act of 1974 (2 U.S.C. 621 et seq.) and any other Act.

“(B) Any amounts appropriated to the Fund in excess of the amount specified under subsection (c)(2) shall be scored as discretionary budget authority and outlays for any estimate of an appropriations Act.”.

**SA 5079.** Mr. MORAN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 5051 proposed by Mr. TESTER (for himself and Mr. MORAN) to the bill H.R. 3967, to improve health care and benefits for veterans exposed to toxic substances, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Beginning on page 118, strike line 9 and all that follows through page 119, line 2, and insert the following:

“(a) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—(1) There is authorized to be appropriated to the Fund for fiscal year 2023 through fiscal year 2031 such sums as are necessary, pursuant to the limitation in paragraph (2), to increase funding, over the fiscal year 2021 level, for investment in—

“(A) the delivery of veterans’ health care associated with exposure to environmental hazards in the active military, naval, air, or space service in programs administered by the Under Secretary for Health;

“(B) any expenses incident to the delivery of veterans’ health care and benefits associated with exposure to environmental hazards in the active military, naval, air, or space service, including administrative expenses, such as information technology and claims processing and appeals, and excluding leases as authorized or approved under section 8104 of this title; and

“(C) medical and other research relating to exposure to environmental hazards.

“(2) LIMITATION.—For the period of fiscal years 2023 through 2031, amounts authorized to be appropriated to the Fund may not exceed a cumulative total of \$116,800,000,000.”.

On page 119, line 8, strike “and each subsequent fiscal year” and insert “through fiscal year 2031”.

On page 120, strike lines 1 through 7 and insert the following:

“(2)(A) Except as provided in subparagraph (B), amounts appropriated to the Fund for fiscal years 2023 through 2031 pursuant to this section shall be counted as direct spending under the Congressional Budget and Impoundment Control Act of 1974 (2 U.S.C. 621 et seq.) and any other Act.

“(B) Any amounts appropriated to the Fund in excess of the amount specified under subsection (c)(2) shall be scored as discretionary budget authority and outlays for any estimate of an appropriations Act.”.

**SA 5080.** Ms. ERNST submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 5051 proposed by Mr. TESTER (for himself and Mr. MORAN) to the bill H.R. 3967, to improve health care and benefits for veterans exposed to toxic substances, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

#### **SEC. \_\_\_\_ . ANNUAL REPORT AND RECISSIONS.**

(a) ANNUAL REPORT.—Not later than September 30 of each fiscal year, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to Congress and transmit to the Secretary of the Treasury a report detailing the amounts, denoted in dollars, expended by the Department of Veterans Affairs in that fiscal year to carry out this Act and the amendments made by this Act.

(b) ANNUAL RECISSIONS.—At the beginning of each fiscal year, beginning with the first fiscal year beginning after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of the Treasury shall rescind, from such accounts of the Treasury as the Secretary considers appropriate, amounts that were appropriated to such accounts more than five years previously and remain unobligated. The total amount rescinded under this subsection in a fiscal year shall be equal to the total amount last reported by the Secretary under subsection (a).

**SA 5081.** Mr. CARPER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 5051 proposed by Mr. TESTER (for himself and Mr. MORAN) to the bill H.R. 3967, to improve health care and benefits for veterans exposed

to toxic substances, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title VIII, add the following:

#### **SEC. 809. NATIONAL SECURITY STRATEGY SAVINGS PLAN REQUIREMENT.**

Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Defense shall submit to Congress a plan to save \$280,000,000,000 relative to the National Security Strategy.

**SA 5082.** Mr. CARPER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 5051 proposed by Mr. TESTER (for himself and Mr. MORAN) to the bill H.R. 3967, to improve health care and benefits for veterans exposed to toxic substances, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end, add the following:

#### **TITLE X—OTHER MATTERS**

#### **SEC. 1001. CERTIFICATION AND REPORT ON TOXIC EXPOSURES EXPERIENCED BY MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Defense shall establish a complaint system through which a member of the Armed Forces may report any toxic exposure of such member in connection with service in the Armed Forces.

(b) TOXIC EXPOSURE DEFINED.—In this section, the term “toxic exposure” has the meaning given such term in section 101 of title 38, United States Code, as amended by section 102(b).

**SA 5083.** Mr. CARPER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 5051 proposed by Mr. TESTER (for himself and Mr. MORAN) to the bill H.R. 3967, to improve health care and benefits for veterans exposed to toxic substances, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end, add the following:

#### **TITLE X—OTHER MATTERS**

#### **SEC. 1001. SYSTEM TO RECEIVE REPORTS ON TOXIC EXPOSURES EXPERIENCED BY MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Defense shall establish a system through which a member of the Armed Forces may report any suspected incident of toxic exposure experienced by such member in connection with service in the Armed Forces.

(b) TOXIC EXPOSURE DEFINED.—In this section, the term “toxic exposure” has the meaning given such term in section 101 of title 38, United States Code, as amended by section 102(b).

**SA 5084.** Mr. CARPER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 5051 proposed by Mr. TESTER (for himself and Mr. MORAN) to the bill H.R. 3967, to improve health care and benefits for veterans exposed to toxic substances, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 121, between lines 12 and 13, insert the following:

(c) PLAN FOR USE OF FUNDS.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate and the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives a detailed plan for obligating and expending amounts from



the Cost of War Toxic Exposures Fund, including a detailed justification for each type of obligation of such amounts.

(d) INSPECTOR GENERAL OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS AUDITS AND REPORTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 120 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter, the Inspector General of the Department of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate and the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives a report examining the obligations and expenditures made using amounts from the Cost of War Toxic Exposures Fund during the period covered by the report.

(2) CONTENTS.—Each report under paragraph (1) shall include the following:

(A) A comparison of how the amounts from the Cost of War Toxic Exposures Fund are being obligated and expended to how the amounts were planned to be obligated and expended in the plan under subsection (c).

(B) Identification of waste, fraud, and abuse, if any.

(C) Such other matters as the Inspector General determines relevant.

(e) COMPTROLLER GENERAL OF THE UNITED STATES REVIEWS.—

(1) INTERIM REPORT.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate and the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives an interim report containing a review of obligations and expenditures made using covered funds.

(B) CONTENTS.—The report required by subparagraph (A) shall include the following:

(i) A review of the process of the Department of Veterans Affairs for preparing the request for amounts from the Cost of War Toxic Exposures Fund.

(ii) An explanation of how the expenditure of such amounts met the goals of the Department.

(2) FINAL REPORT.—Not later than September 30, 2024, the Comptroller General shall submit to the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate and the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives a final report on the matters specified under paragraph (1).

**SA 5085.** Mr. PAUL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3967, to improve health care and benefits for veterans exposed to toxic substances, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

**SEC. \_\_\_\_ OFFSET THROUGH TEMPORARY REDUCTION IN FOREIGN ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS.**

During the 10-year period beginning on October 1, 2022, no Federal funds may be expended by the United States Agency for International Development other than funds that have been appropriated for Israel.

**SA 5086.** Mr. LANKFORD submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 5051 proposed by Mr. TESTER (for himself and Mr. MORAN) to the bill H.R. 3967, to improve health care and benefits for veterans exposed to toxic substances, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 72, line 25, strike “gender,”.

**SA 5087.** Mr. SCHUMER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3967, to improve health care and benefits for veterans exposed to toxic substances, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 1, line 3, strike “1 day” and insert “2 days”.

**SA 5088.** Mr. SCHUMER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3967, to improve health care and benefits for veterans exposed to toxic substances, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 1, line 3, strike “3 days” and insert “4 days”.

**SA 5089.** Mr. SCHUMER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3967, to improve health care and benefits for veterans exposed to toxic substances, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end add the following:

**SEC. \_\_\_\_ EFFECTIVE DATE.**

This Act shall take effect on the date that is 5 days after the date of enactment of this Act.

**SA 5090.** Mr. SCHUMER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3967, to improve health care and benefits for veterans exposed to toxic substances, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 1, line 3, strike “5” and insert “6”.

**SA 5091.** Mr. SCHUMER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3967, to improve health care and benefits for veterans exposed to toxic substances, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 1, line 3, strike “6 days” and insert “7 days”.

**SA 5092.** Mr. SCHUMER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3967, to improve health care and benefits for veterans exposed to toxic substances, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end add the following:

**SEC. \_\_\_\_ EFFECTIVE DATE.**

This Act shall take effect on the date that is 8 days after the date of enactment of this Act.

**SA 5093.** Mr. SCHUMER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3967, to improve health care and benefits for veterans exposed to toxic substances, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 1, line 3, strike “8 days” and insert “9 days”.

**SA 5094.** Mr. INHOFE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 5051 proposed by Mr. TESTER (for himself and Mr. MORAN) to

the bill H.R. 3967, to improve health care and benefits for veterans exposed to toxic substances, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Beginning on page 114, strike line 3 and all that follows through page 117, line 21, and insert the following:

**SEC. 804. CAMP LEJEUNE, NORTH CAROLINA, CONTAMINATED WATER EXPOSURE COMPENSATION.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—An individual, including a veteran (as defined in section 101 of title 38, United States Code), who resided, worked, or was otherwise exposed (including in utero exposure) for not less than 30 days during the period beginning on August 1, 1953, and ending on December 31, 1987, to water at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, that was supplied by, or on behalf of, the United States, or the legal representative of such an individual, may file a claim for compensation with the Attorney General to obtain appropriate relief for harm that was caused by exposure to the water at Camp Lejeune.

(b) DETERMINATION AND PAYMENT OF CLAIMS.—

(1) ESTABLISHMENT OF FILING PROCEDURES.—

(A) PROCEDURES.—The Attorney General shall establish procedures for submission of claims under subsection (a) for compensation under this section.

(B) BURDEN OF PROOF.—The burden of proof shall be on the party submitting a claim under subsection (a) to show it is more likely than not that the water at Camp Lejeune caused the claimed harm.

(2) DETERMINATION OF CLAIMS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—(i) The Attorney General shall, in accordance with this section, determine whether each claim filed under subsection (a) meets the requirements of this section.

(ii) All reasonable doubt with regard to whether a claim meets the requirements of this section shall be resolved in favor of the claimant.

(B) CONSULTATION.—The Attorney General shall, in consultation with the Secretary of Health and Human Services, the Secretary of Defense, and the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, establish guidelines for determining what documentation is necessary to establish a basis for eligibility for compensation for an injury or condition based on exposure to water at Camp Lejeune.

(C) PAYMENT OF CLAIMS.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—The Attorney General shall pay, from amounts available in the Camp Lejeune Fund, claims filed under subsection (a) that the Attorney General determines meet the requirements of this section.

(ii) HEALTH AND DISABILITY BENEFITS RELATING TO WATER EXPOSURE.—The Attorney General may offset from any compensation awarded to an individual under this section by the amount of any disability compensation, payment, or benefit provided to the individual—

(I) under—

(aa) any program under the laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs;

(bb) the Medicare program under title XVIII of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395 et seq.); or

(cc) the Medicaid program under title XIX of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396 et seq.); and

(II) in connection with health care or a disability relating to exposure to the water at Camp Lejeune.

(iii) VETERANS AND LABOR OFFSETS.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs and the Secretary of Labor may each offset from any award made to an individual under a provision of law administered by the respective

Secretary compensation awarded under this section to such individual.

(iv) **RIGHT OF SUBROGATION.**—Upon payment of compensation pursuant to a claim under subsection (a), the United States Government is subrogated for the amount of the payment to a right or claim that the individual to whom the payment was made may have against any person on account of injuries referred to in such subsection.

(v) **GUIDELINES.**—The Attorney General shall establish guidelines for determining amounts of compensation under this section for injuries or conditions, including reasonable compensation for medical expenses, lost wages, and pain and suffering.

(D) **ACTION ON CLAIMS.**—

(i) **IN GENERAL.**—(I) The Attorney General shall complete the determination on each claim filed under subsection (a) in accordance with the procedures established under paragraph (1)(A) not later than 12 months after the date on which the claim is filed under such subsection.

(II) For purposes of determining when the 12-month period ends, a claim filed under subsection (a) shall be deemed filed as of the date of its receipt by the Attorney General.

(III) In the event of the denial of a claim under this section, the claimant shall be permitted a reasonable period in which to seek administrative review of the denial by the Attorney General.

(IV) The Attorney General shall make a final determination with respect to any administrative review under subclause (III) within 90 days after the receipt of the claimant's request for such review.

(ii) **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION.**—The Attorney General may request from any claimant under this section any reasonable additional information or documentation necessary to complete the determination on the claim in accordance with the procedures established under paragraph (1)(A).

(iii) **PAYMENT WITHIN 6 WEEKS.**—The Attorney General shall ensure that a claim filed under subsection (a) that is approved under this section is paid not later than 6 weeks after the date on which such claim is approved.

(E) **PAYMENT IN FULL SETTLEMENT OF CLAIMS AGAINST THE UNITED STATES.**—Except as otherwise authorized by law, the acceptance of payment by an individual under this section shall be in full satisfaction of all claims of or on behalf of that individual against the United States that arise out of exposure to water contamination at Camp Lejeune under subsection (a).

(F) **JUDICIAL REVIEW.**—(i) An individual whose claim for compensation under this section is denied may seek judicial review within 180 days of denial solely in a district court of the United States.

(ii) The court shall have jurisdiction to review the denial on the administrative record and shall hold unlawful and set aside the denial if it is arbitrary, capricious, an abuse of discretion, or otherwise not in accordance with law.

(C) **ATTORNEY FEES.**—

(1) **GENERAL RULE.**—Notwithstanding any contract, the representative of an individual may not receive, for services rendered in connection with the claim of an individual under this section, more than that percentage specified in paragraph (2) of a payment made under this section on such claim.

(2) **APPLICABLE PERCENTAGE LIMITATIONS.**—The percentage referred to in paragraph (1) is—

(A) 2 percent for the filing of an initial claim; and

(B) 10 percent with respect to—

(i) any claim with respect to which a representative has made a contract for services

before the date of the enactment of this Act; or

(ii) a resubmission of a denied claim.

(3) **PENALTY.**—Any such representative who violates this section shall be fined not more than \$5,000.

(d) **EXCEPTION FOR COMBATANT ACTIVITIES.**—This section does not apply to any claim for harm arising out of the combatant activities of the Armed Forces.

(e) **PERIOD FOR FILING CLAIMS.**—A claim filed under this section may not be commenced after the date that is two years after the date that the Attorney General establishes the procedures required by subsection (b)(1)(A).

(f) **REPORT.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—No later than one year after the effective date set forth in subsection (f) and not less frequently than once each year thereafter, the Attorney General shall, in consultation with the Secretary of Health and Human Services, the Secretary of Defense, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, and the Secretary of Labor, submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on activities under this section.

(2) **CONTENTS.**—Each report submitted under paragraph (1) shall include the following:

(A) The total number of claims filed under this section.

(B) A description of the harms claimed.

(C) The number of approved claims.

(D) The number of claims under review.

(E) The number of denied claims.

(F) The amount of each approved claim.

(G) The total amount of approved claims.

(H) An analysis and descriptions of offsets made to approved claims.

(3) **APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES OF CONGRESS DEFINED.**—In this section, the term “appropriate committees of Congress” means the Committee on the Judiciary, the Committee on Armed Services, the Committee on Veterans Affairs, and the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions of the Senate.

#### **SEC. 805. CAMP LEJEUNE FUND.**

(a) **ESTABLISHMENT.**—There is in the Treasury of the United States an account to be known as the “Camp Lejeune Fund” (in this section referred to as the “Fund”).

(b) **DEPOSITS.**—There is appropriated to the Fund, out of any money in the Treasury available for appropriation, such sums as may be necessary to pay claims that are determined by the Attorney General under subsection (b)(2)(C)(i) of section 804 to meet the requirements of such section.

(c) **USE OF FUNDS.**—Amounts in the Fund may be used to provide payment of compensation under section 804.

#### **AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET**

Ms. SINEMA. Mr. President, I have one request for committees to meet during today's session of the Senate. They have the approval of the Majority and Minority Leaders.

Pursuant to rule XXVI, paragraph 5(a), of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the following committees are authorized to meet during today's session of the Senate:

##### **SUBCOMMITTEE ON STRATEGIC FORCES**

The Subcommittee on Strategic Forces of the Committee on Armed Services is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Monday, June 13, 2022, at 5:30 p.m., in closed session.

#### **APPOINTMENT**

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair, on behalf of the Republican Leader, pursuant to the provisions of Public Law 117–81, appoints the following individual to serve as a member of the Commission on the National Defense Strategy: The Honorable Eric S. Edelman of Virginia.

#### **ORDERS FOR TUESDAY, JUNE 14, 2022**

Ms. SINEMA. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 11 a.m. on Tuesday, June 14, and that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, and morning business be closed; that upon the conclusion of morning business, the Senate resume consideration of Calendar No. 388, H.R. 3967; further, that all time during adjournment, recess, morning business, and leader remarks count postcloture; finally, that the Senate recess from 12:30 p.m. until 2:15 p.m. to allow for the weekly caucus meetings.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### **ORDER FOR ADJOURNMENT**

Ms. SINEMA. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order, following the remarks of Senator PORTMAN.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, are we in legislative session?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate is considering the PACT Act.

#### **UKRAINE**

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, for the 15th straight week, while the U.S. Senate has been in session, I come to the floor to talk about what is going on in Ukraine. This is the war that Russia continues to wage against the people of Ukraine. I am going to talk about what has happened in the last week—some of it is very concerning—but also about what we can do right now to help more, to help our ally Ukraine, to help President Zelenskyy and his duly elected government, and to help the people of Ukraine.

Last week, I talked about a grim milestone, 100 days of this war. It is becoming a war of attrition. The Russians expected a quick victory, you remember. That didn't happen. Now they are grinding it out in one area called the Donbas region. And unfortunately, they are making some incremental progress there. In a minute, I will have a map here to show you where the

Donbas region is. But that is where the focus is right now. That is where the Russians are grinding it out.

The fate of Ukraine, its future, may be decided here in the next few months or maybe even weeks, given what is happening in the Donbas. The Russians have regrouped, and they are using their superior weapons, particularly long-range artillery. The Ukrainians, although they are fighting valiantly, just don't have that longer range artillery to be able to counteract what Russia is doing. So the Russians are sitting back with this long-range, more accurate artillery. They are hitting Ukrainian positions, taking out Ukrainian cities, flattening them. And then the Ukrainians can't reach them because they don't have artillery that is long range.

There has been some Ukrainian progress in the past week. If you look at this map, you can see that in the northeast, around Kharkiv—up here, you see this light blue—Ukrainians have made some progress. In fact, in one case, they actually pushed the Russians back to the Russian border.

They also made some progress here in the south. And you see the city of Kherson, that was one of the first big cities that the Russians took during this most recent attack. The Ukrainians are now moving toward that area. That is positive news.

But, frankly, one reason they are making the progress is the Russians are all focused right here. This is the Donbas region we talked about earlier, and this is where the Russians are making incremental progress and killing, frankly, a lot of Ukrainian civilians but also Ukrainian soldiers.

Russia is grinding it out, as I said earlier, meaning that they are using their superior artillery fire. They have more troops. They have more weapons. But the Ukrainian defenders are fighting hard. They are making the Russians pay for every single inch of territory that is being taken. This is particularly true in Severodonetsk, which is right in here.

In Severodonetsk, there is an ongoing battle tonight as we talk. The Russians are engaged in urban combat there, and the Ukrainians have fiercely defended their homeland. But I will say, the Russians are still advancing bit by bit, in some cases kilometer by kilometer, every day, because they have the firepower, especially the longer-range, accurate, and deadly artillery.

Reports yesterday indicate that unless Ukrainians can get access to that long-range artillery themselves, Severodonetsk and the entire Luhansk region could fall to Russia soon. Possibly within weeks. This should alarm all of us. It should alarm the administration; it should alarm the Congress. Because every time Russia gains more territory, they reduce it to mostly rubble, destroy it, and then they dig in, making it twice as hard to get that territory back.

Because the Russians have more artillery than the Ukrainians and their weapons have longer ranges, the Russian forces concentrate their massive firepower on Ukrainian positions from a distance, as I said, which the Ukrainian forces cannot reach. And then they move in.

They destroy the territory. They occupy it. This disparity in the quality and quantity of artillery has put Ukraine at a distinct disadvantage. The good news is that we can fix this problem. We can level this playing field and address this disparity. America and her allies have the ability to do it, and it is urgent that we do it now.

In our inventory, we have hundreds of what are called High Mobility Artillery Rocket Systems or HIMARS. It is an advanced system that is actually superior to the Russian artillery in almost every way, more mobility, faster reload time, more accuracy, and—more importantly—more range.

Getting these systems, these HIMARS systems to Ukraine could be a game changer. It could save so many lives. With these systems in the arsenal, the Ukrainians could turn the tables on the Russians here in the Donbas region.

They could grind the Russian advance to a halt and maybe even push the Russian forces back, as they are doing in Kharkiv up here or down here in the south.

Unfortunately, the Biden administration has been unwilling to act quickly on these HIMARS. Two weeks ago, after weeks of Ukrainian requests, echoed by some of us here in the U.S. Congress, President Biden announced that he would provide Ukraine with some of these systems. I was really pleased we were finally taking that step.

However, according to the Department of Defense, I now learned that the administration is only sending four of these systems—four. The administration has said that it is only providing Ukraine with mid-range missiles as well, meaning Ukrainian troops will need to fire from closer to Russian positions and put themselves at greater risk.

That announcement of our decision to send four systems will be 2 weeks old on Wednesday. We were told these systems require almost 3 weeks in training to be able to operate. That means, at best, Ukraine will have four U.S. artillery systems operational sometime late this week or maybe next week.

Ukraine has been fighting for its life for weeks along a massive front line, this front line all along here. And the Biden administration is only now sending this military support; and, frankly, it is just not enough. Combine this with the public reporting that the M777 howitzer promised to Ukraine months ago back in mid-April are arriving very slowly, and you have a picture that shows that we are not responding with urgency to the situation in Ukraine.

You don't have to take it from me. Listen to the military advisor and President Zelenskyy's chief of staff Oleksiy Arestovych: "If we get 60 of these [rocket artillery] systems," that is the HIMARS I am talking about, "then the Russians will lose all ability to advance anywhere, they will be stopped [dead] in their tracks. If we get 40, they will advance, albeit very slowly with heavy casualties; with 20, they will continue to advance with higher casualties than now."

So he is talking about the need for 60 or at least 40; 20 won't be enough. Unfortunately, we are talking about four. To their credit, the British announced last Tuesday that they will send something similar to these multiple launch rocket systems to Ukraine. It is a larger version, actually, of the HIMARS rocket artillery system that they are sending. I appreciate that. However, the BBC reports that they are now only sending three, at least initially.

The world looks to America for leadership, and if America leads with only four rocket artillery systems, the rest of the world is going to follow with similarly modest support. I hope this will change. I hope we will see that these numbers improve. I would like to be proven wrong that those artillery systems are already on their way. I hope they are, but the best information we have is that is not true.

It has been months now, and the Ukrainians cannot afford to have imprecise and low-level assistance from the world's most powerful military. This Congress sent \$40 billion in aid to the Ukrainians, \$21 billion of that was military assistance. I think we should expect and demand that the administration utilize that funding as much as possible and provide Ukraine with the precise and powerful military equipment it actually needs to be able to fight this war, to stop the bloodshed, by pushing the Russians back, \$21 billion is a lot of money, let's be sure it is spent properly.

Another Ukrainian official, Vadym Skibitsky, Ukraine's Deputy head of Military Intelligence, told a British outlet: "Everything now depends on what [the West] gives us. Ukraine has one artillery piece to 10 to 15 Russian artillery pieces."

Ukrainians need our help. And Congress has done its job in an overwhelming, bipartisan fashion. We should not be tentative now—not now. Russia's brutal unrelenting rocket and missile attacks throughout Ukraine, including attacks on schools and churches, hospitals and apartment buildings, have killed tens of thousands of Ukrainian civilians and soldiers, while entire cities have been laid to rubble by the Russian barrages. While the media coverage has waned significantly here in the United States, the people of Ukraine are still feeling the effect and the terrible impacts of this bloody and illegal invasion of their homeland in so many ways. One is the blockade of Ukraine's Black Sea ports.

Since the war began, Russia has put this blockade in place preventing the export of millions of tons of grain and other agricultural products desperately needed, by the way, in Africa, in the Middle East, and other developing countries.

Just this past Saturday, Deputy Agriculture Minister Taras Vysotsky reported that 300,000 tons of grain were destroyed when Russia shelled a warehouse near one of these ports.

So Russia is actually shelling grain bins to destroy the grain. Let me be clear: Food should never be a target and should never be used as leverage in negotiations. Malign actors around the world have used food as a weapon—the Houthis in Yemen, Assad in Syria, and now Russia in Ukraine.

Russia has the rest of the world hostage with its barbaric food blockade. President Putin recently suggested that he would lift his stranglehold on Ukraine's Black Sea ports, including Odesa, but he said he would only do so if all the sanctions were lifted on Russia. In other words, Russia would like to be rewarded for releasing the hostage it has taken.

Russia must release its blockade immediately, without any conditions. Millions of lives depend on it. I would expect the administration and allies—including Turkey—to come up with contingency plans now, if they don't have them already. This impacts nations in Africa, the Middle East, East Asia, and particularly, again, these poor countries in Africa depend on the Ukrainian grains, otherwise there will be massive food shortages.

In Turkey, President Erdogan continues to negotiate an exit corridor for Ukrainian grain through the Black Sea. I thank him for doing that. He should continue to do so. And even in China—no friend of the United States and a very good friend of Russia right now—President Xi Jinping has warned of a bad winter wheat harvest. I hope he can persuade Vladimir Putin that needlessly causing a global hunger catastrophe will not do him any favors.

The dire warnings of global food insecurity and price hikes if this blockade continues should concern everyone in this Congress, everyone in America, and everyone in this administration, certainly.

The world is looking to our leadership to help solve this problem. What we need is a creation of a humanitarian corridor that can go out, at least through the port at Odesa through which Ukrainian agricultural products can reach the world market.

Until then, other avenues have to be explored. When I was in Romania 2 weeks ago, the prime minister there told me that they intend to boost their road and rail and canal infrastructure to the port in Romania to help export as much Ukrainian grain as possible. This would help, and I appreciate—really appreciate—the Romanian effort, but it can't match the capacity of Odesa or these other ports in Ukraine.

At a security conference in Singapore on Sunday, Ukraine's deputy foreign minister announced that Ukraine will, indeed, try to export its grains through Romania as well as through Poland, as well as any place they can get it out.

They are looking for a third route as an example through the Baltic States, Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia. That is a desperate attempt by Ukraine to try to get this grain out, but, again, it can never match the huge volumes that can go by ship from its own ports.

As the head of the Ukraine Grain Association said last week:

I can tell you we won't find a solution [for] exports [without Black Sea port access].

Unfortunately, I think he is right. It is clear that Russia is trying to starve the world into pressuring Ukraine to surrender. Meanwhile, Russia's crimes within Ukraine continue. A few days ago, Ukrainian prosecutors announced that eight more war crimes have been filed against Russian soldiers. These cases are part of a more than 16,000 investigation that Ukraine has opened into possible war crimes committed during the war, according to Ukraine's prosecutor general—16,000 investigations right now into war crimes.

In the past war crimes trials, two captured Russian soldiers were each sentenced to 11½ years in prison in late May after pleading guilty to shelling a town in Eastern Ukraine. And a Russian soldier was handed a life sentence for shooting a 62-year-old Ukrainian civilian in the head.

These heinous acts of violence are going to continue unless Ukraine has the ability to push back. We do need more of these sentences of war criminals to try to act as a deterrent to stop the further Russian barbarity in Ukraine. Maybe some officers, maybe some officials in the Kremlin looking at these war crime convictions will say, you know what, maybe we shouldn't be attacking our peaceful neighbors and killing them and raping them and terrorizing this country.

There is another important issue I want to mention, one that is worth the world's attention: Ukrainian orphans. Unfortunately, there are hundreds of Ukrainian orphans who are stuck in Ukraine or elsewhere in Europe. A lot of these orphans have ties to America and unique ties to about 200 American families who are ready, willing, and able to host these children. These families have been in the process of adopting these children for a long time, from before the invasion. Many of these children have actually previously visited the United States to meet with their soon-to-be adopted families.

Unfortunately, many of these children returned right before the invasion and are unaccounted for now. Many have lost contact with their soon-to-be families. I have constituents in Ohio, and I know hundreds of other families across the country ready to welcome these children into their homes.

In March, along with 26 colleagues, I wrote to the State Department, I have

yet to hear back from that letter, but we asked for two things: one, to help identify these children, this needs to be done in collaboration with the Ukrainian government, of course, and U.S.-based organizations; and, two, my letter urged the administration to issue travel visas to allow adoption-eligible kids to come live with their American host families now.

The State Department should use its powers under the law to immediately process nonimmigrant visas that will allow these kids with in-process adoptions to travel to the U.S. and stay with their host families in the United States instead of requiring these children to remain in other locations for displaced persons in Europe or in Ukraine.

Many of these children may be given refuge in neighboring countries. However, I believe in the unique circumstances where children already have established relationships with these families in the United States, they should be able to come here and be with their host families who can ensure the child's safety and stability.

At the same time, we could continue to work with the Ukrainian government, which has been open to finalizing the adoptions that were in process before the war began.

I will close with this: I have now come to the floor every week since just before President Putin began this illegal and unprovoked invasion against the people of a democratic Ukraine who just wanted to live in peace with their neighbors—including Russia.

This is the fight during our generation where democracy is on the line. I am not surprised, because I have seen the spirit and bravery of the Ukrainian people firsthand in my many trips to Ukraine, including meeting with Ukrainian troops on the front line before this latest invasion. I am not surprised that they have held off Russia so far. Their strength and resiliency is a marvel.

Again, it is not what Vladimir Putin expected. It is, frankly, not what our own U.S. military expected. They have fought hard, and they continue to every day. But they need more help.

Last week, I met with a great fighter in this cause, my friend Andy Futey from Ohio, who leads the Ukrainian World Congress for the Ukraine diaspora all over the world. He has been a strong and consistent advocate for Ukraine and joined me at a rally, actually, at the White House with hundreds of Ukrainian Americans a couple months ago.

When I met with Andy last week and other members of the Ukrainian World Congress who had just returned from Ukraine, they spoke with passion about the destruction they had seen in Ukraine, about the steep price that the Ukrainian people have paid and continue to pay to be able to remain free and independent.

With them was a young woman from Ukraine who was very emotional in her

appeals, with tears, saying, America needs to do more during this hour of need. As they made the case passionately that the U.S. needs to continue sending weapons and artillery and sooner not later, they talked about the need for these long-range weapons we talked about tonight, so the Ukrainians have a fighting chance.

Every day the United States fails to sufficiently support Ukraine only serves as a detriment to the Ukrainians, who need us to lead the free world in helping them win this war. Brave Ukrainians are dying every day. We just can't afford to delay.

My colleague Senator DICK DURBIN and I cochair what is called the Senate Ukraine Caucus, which we founded back in 2015. Later this week, we will bring the caucus together to meet with the leaders in the Ukrainian parliament, the Rada, who are here visiting Washington to urge greater support in America for their country. We are eager to hear what they have to say.

Many of us here in this Chamber get it. We know that America can't afford to stay on the sidelines and be a spectator in this conflict. At this crucial time in the battle for freedom, democracy, and the ability for countries to have their territorial integrity respected, at this critical hour, America cannot afford to be tentative.

We must remember the lessons of the late 1930s: that appeasing tyrants will not satiate their desire to violently conquer and subjugate their neighbors. Some folks in this town may not understand that, but Ukrainians understand it. They know what it is like to live under the thumb of authoritarians, and they broke away from that and to-

ward democracy, first in 1991 and again in 2014.

I was in Ukraine after the Revolution of Dignity, in 2014, where Ukrainians decided for themselves that they wanted to turn away from Russian domination and turn to us and to Europe and to pursue a hopeful future of democracy and freedom. Now, President Putin is trying to extinguish that hope. We must not let him.

One question that many of us have of the administration is: What is the end goal here? Is our objective to help Ukraine grind down Russia's military so that for some number of years it is unable to undertake another violent campaign like this? Is our objective to topple President Putin's regime? Or is our objective to help the Ukrainians expel the Russian invaders from their sovereign Ukrainian territory, including Crimea and the Donbas?

The administration dodges these questions by saying: It is up to the Ukrainians to decide.

I understand that, but the Ukrainians have already decided. They want their sovereign territory back—all of it. I have discussed this at length with Ukrainians, and they have consistently said what I have heard from their parliamentary leaders in the past and will again this week: Nothing less than the full restoration of Ukrainian sovereign territory is their goal.

Saying that we support Russia walking away with any Ukrainian territory would just embolden Russia in this conflict and embolden aggressors and authoritarians in the future.

It has now been 110 days of unrelenting Russian attacks on our ally Ukraine, and it has been 110 days of pushing the administration to help

more. This happened with Russian oil, Russian gas exports. It happened with trade and banking sanctions and various kinds of military assistance. Now it is the HIMARS. They need these weapons.

America has made its stand. We are on the side of freedom over tyranny, democracy and self-determination over authoritarianism and conquest. The countries of the free world are with us, but more so when we lead. Now is not the time to be tentative or equivocal. At this critical juncture, let's work with allies to provide our democratic brothers and sisters in Ukraine what they need to protect the homeland and defend democracy.

I yield the floor.

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#### ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 11 A.M. TOMORROW

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands adjourned until 11 a.m. tomorrow.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 6:48 p.m., adjourned until Tuesday, June 14, 2022, at 11 a.m.

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#### CONFIRMATIONS

Executive nominations confirmed by the Senate June 13, 2022:

##### DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

JOSHUA D. HURWIT, OF IDAHO, TO BE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY FOR THE DISTRICT OF IDAHO, FOR THE TERM OF FOUR YEARS.

GERARD M. KARAM, OF PENNSYLVANIA, TO BE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY FOR THE MIDDLE DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA FOR THE TERM OF FOUR YEARS.

JACQUELINE C. ROMERO, OF PENNSYLVANIA, TO BE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA FOR THE TERM OF FOUR YEARS.